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Compiled by Linné Ourada

We've Got Your Numbers

0 Despite past rumors and concern that brain cancer is linked to mobile phone use, a recent Japanese study has found zero evidence that the two are related. Scientists at Tokyo Women's Medical University compared phone use in 322 brain cancer patients with 683 healthy participants and found that regularly using a mobile phone did not affect the likelihood of getting brain cancer.

SOURCE: REUTERS

1 We want our MTV—mobile TV, that is. According to a recent study, mobile TV ranked as the No. 1 feature consumers want included with their mobile phones. The results indicate that 34% of respondents rank TV as the top in-demand application for mobile phones, and 44% said they plan to adopt mobile TV within the next two years.

SOURCE: CNN/ERICSSON

50 Analysts predict that by 2011, of the 941 million handsets that will ship worldwide, more than 50% will be music phones, meaning the phone can play music files and has a memory card slot.

SOURCE: MULTIMEDIA INTELLIGENCE

168 Worldwide subscribers to location-based services are expected to increase by 168% this year, while revenue will increase 169%. Growth will likely be fueled by the arrival of mobile phones that integrate location-based services, including built-in technologies similar to that of GPS devices.

SOURCE: GARTNER

1 Out with the old; in with the new—or at least, in with the more-advanced. Consumers are abandoning their basic cell phone models for smartphones with more advanced features, and it appears that Apple and RIM are the two companies that will benefit the most from the shift. A recent survey indicates that the Apple iPhone is the first choice among consumers planning to purchase a new phone in the next six months, while the RIM BlackBerry is the second choice among consumers.

SOURCE: CHANGEWAVE

39 Can you hear me now? Not according to a recent cell phone audit, which revealed that an average of 39% of mobile calls fall below the minimum standard for voice quality. The study tracked 650 million live calls in 16 different networks across 12 countries.

SOURCE: DITECH NETWORKS

7 Delta Connection airlines accounted for seven of the nation's 11 most continually delayed flights in December 2007. Two of the flights, operated by Delta affiliate ExpressJet, arrived late every time they flew in December.

SOURCE: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Noteworthy

Compiled by
Kylee Dickey

Exchange Finally Comes To The iPhone

Image courtesy of Apple

After months of anticipation and rumors, Apple finally confirmed recently that the iPhone will support Microsoft Exchange ActiveSync. This added functionality lets iPhone users access Outlook email, contacts, and calendars. The new support covers Microsoft Exchange Server 2003 and 2007. Version 2.0 of the iPhone's software will also include Cisco IPsec VPN (virtual private network) to gain encrypted access to files on a private company network.

1GB Of Online Storage For BlackBerry Users

Users of RIM's BlackBerry smartphones can now take advantage of 1GB of free online storage through an offering from Cortado and Box.net. This new service, Cortado Connect for Box.net, lets users move files between their smartphones and Box.net's online storage. It is possible to not only store files online, but also share them with others. Cortado Connect for Box.net is a free service.

T-Mobile Offers RIM BlackBerry 8820

T-Mobile customers can now buy the BlackBerry 8820, which includes GPS and support for T-Mobile's add-on HotSpot @Home Wi-Fi calling service. The BlackBerry 8820 includes several location-based applications, including BlackBerry Maps and TeleNav GPS Navigator. This smartphone supports international roaming with its quad-band (GSM [Global System for Mobile Communications]/GPRS [General Packet Radio Service]/EDGE [Enhanced Data for GSM Evolution]) technology. The BlackBerry 8820 features voice recognition for voice-activated dialing. It supports BlackBerry Internet Service, which provides quick access to 10 email accounts.

A Phone With Interactive Touch Lighting

LG Electronics recently introduced the LG-KF510 mobile phone, which includes a feature called Interactive Touch Lighting that aids users in navigating the phone's animated menus. When you touch the phone's touchpad, LEDs under the touchpad illuminate. The phone has a very slim design and comes in two colors: Stardust Dark Gray and Sunset Red. The phone has a built-in 3MP camera (with a flash) and a display with ALC (Auto Luminance Control) to preserve battery life.

TSA Gives Color-Coded Lanes A Trial Run

The Transportation Security Administration recently launched the Black Diamond Self-Select Lanes program in select airports to reduce the time travelers spend standing in security lanes. Taking a page from a ski resort playbook, travelers at Boston-Logan, Denver, Orlando, Salt Lake City, and Spokane International are now greeted with three lane options: Family/Special Assistance (green circle), Casual (blue square), and Expert (black diamond). Travelers choose the lane that meets their security clearance comfort level.

More Mobile Broadband Connections To The Internet

According to comScore (www.comscore.com), there was a dramatic increase in the number of people who used mobile broadband services last year. comScore differentiated between Wi-Fi hotspots and mobile broadband by defining mobile broadband as services, such as those from Sprint Nextel and Verizon, which use cellular networks and require users to pay for subscriptions to the service. comScore found that the number of mobile broadband users increased an impressive 154% in 2007.

by Andrew Leibman

Tech To Watch Telepresence

Effective communication is the key to success in everything from business partnerships to personal relationships. And as anyone who's ever been misunderstood can attest, telephone and email are pretty sorry substitutes for in-person interaction. Unfortunately, a majority of our professional communication relies heavily on these limited tools or the more costly and inefficient option: travel. Telepresence is the personal and practical alternative that fills in the nonverbal gaps in your professional communications.

Telepresence is a series of technologies that strive to create the illusion that two or more individuals are interacting and exchanging dialogue as though they were in the same room, even when they might be thousands of miles apart. One form of telepresence you may be familiar with is the video phone or videoconferencing equipment. Current forms of telepresence typically consist of audio and video feedback systems, such as a series of cameras, displays, microphones, and speakers that exist at separate locations connected via the Internet. Most current telepresence offerings also utilize advanced networking techniques and specialized hardware to transmit video and audio feeds to any corner of the globe with little or no perceivable delay.

Telepresence lets you communicate with people a world away, as though they were in the same room.

HP Halo products, for instance, deliver broadcast-quality video and fully duplexed spatial audio between Halo Collaboration Studios scattered all over the world. HP's Halo Multipoint connection technology lets multiple locations connect simultaneously, and thanks to the Halo Gateway, users can join in using standards-based videoconferencing equipment. Darren Podrabsky, HP Halo worldwide marketing manager, says, "We fundamentally believe [telepresence] is the way globally dispersed teams will be collaborating now and into the future." Since launching Halo in 2005, HP has installed the rooms in 22 countries.

Cisco TelePresence is a similar offering that transmits video and spatially-accurate sound between two or more locations. For the OnStage TelePresence Experience, Cisco combined TelePresence with Dimensional Studios' Musion 3D Holographic Projection technology to generate a lifelike holographic image of an individual at a remote location, displayed in real time. Cisco's Director Of Marketing, Erica Schroeder, sees several applications for telepresence in the future: the hospitality industry, ask-the-expert assistance in retail or banking, and doctors' offices for remote diagnosis, as well as "in the legal arena with depositions or hearings, remote lectures or classrooms where world experts can [address large] audiences, or even government officials being able to conduct remote town hall meetings."

Experts agree that the technology has a long way to go before telepresence can fool you into thinking that you're standing eye-to-eye with someone a world away. Telepresence does, however, offer a compelling real-time experience that's far more effective than email or phone. But, then again, you don't have to straighten your tie or comb your hair to talk to someone the old-fashioned way.

Five Reasons To Watch Telepresence

1. Lets you hold conversations with remotely distant individuals
2. Cuts down on business travel expenses
3. Helps you stay in contact with family and friends in a more meaningful way
4. Reduces miscommunications that frequently occur in email and telephone communications
5. Lets experts or notable figures address and interact with large audiences anywhere in the world

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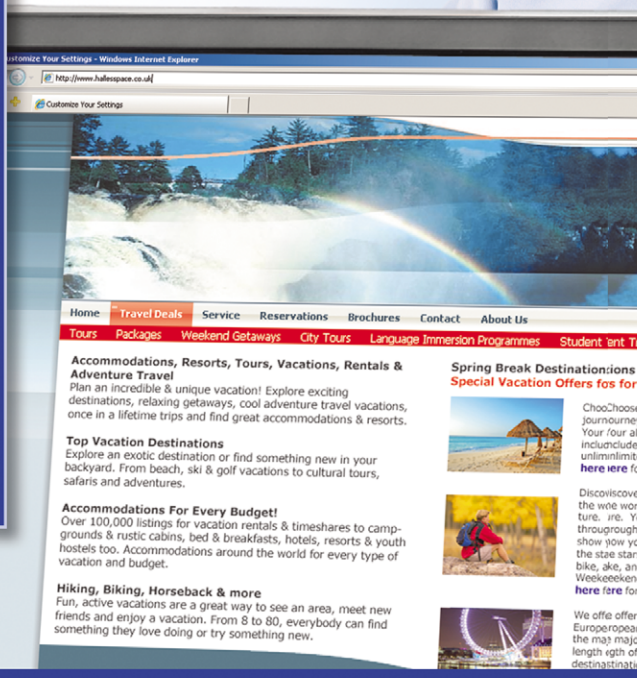

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TAKEAWAY
Relax and enjoy the Voyager, your key to multimedia flexibility.

LG Voyager

Why switch carriers just so you can have an iPhone™? The LG Voyager is much more than your everyday multimedia phone. With its clamshell design, dual 2.8-inch screens, 2MP camera with camcorder, and a music player that supports all of your favorite formats, the Voyager has just what you need in an entertainment-centric phone. To help maintain a sleek, no-button look while also being comfortable to use, the Voyager's front display incorporates tactile feedback, meaning it vibrates each time you touch an on-screen button.

Multimedia isn't the Voyager's only strength: This phone also has a number of helpful tools, including a calculator, calendar, alarm clock, stopwatch, world clock, notepad, and tip calculator. In addition, the Voyager's Bluetooth® capabilities let you connect other devices wirelessly, with support for headset, hands-free, dial-up networking, and advanced audio distribution (stereo) profiles.

Key Facts

- Features V CAST Mobile TV, V CAST Music & Video, and VZ Navigator
- Supports full HTML Internet browsing
- Handles text, picture, and video messaging
- Ready to play, with a music player for MP3, WMA, AAC, and AAC files and 2MP camera and camcorder

Tech Specs

- 1.9GHz CDMA PCS, 800MHz CDMA, EVDO
- Up to 240 minutes talk time
- Up to 480 hours standby time
- Memory expandable up to 8GB with microSD card
- 2.81-inch external touch-screen with vibration feedback
- 2.81-inch internal display
- Bluetooth® 1.2
- USB charging via your computer
- Dual speakers for stereo sound
- 4.69 ounces
- 4.64 x 2.12 x 0.71 inches (HxWxD)

LG Life's Good

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TAKEAWAY
The new Mogul offers the fastest speeds available on the Sprint network.

Mogul By HTC

Think about how convenient it would be if you could leave your laptop at home for short business trips. With Sprint's latest do-everything smartphone, the Mogul by HTC, you'll enjoy full functionality in a pocketable device that makes you wonder why you've been lugging your laptop through airport security for so long. Windows Mobile® 6, Microsoft® Office, email, Internet, and multimedia capabilities give you everything you need to work on the road.

Thanks to a recent firmware update, this smartphone now supports EVDO (Evolution Data Optimized) Rev. A, which provides average download speeds of 600Kbps to 1.4Mbps and average upload speeds of 350 to 500Kbps. That's significantly faster than the previous download speeds of 400 to 700Kbps and upload speeds of 50 to 70Kbps. This firmware update also improves Bluetooth® performance and adds advanced GPS functionality and a Task Manager for the Today screen.

Key Facts

- Use the phone as a high-speed modem for your laptop
- Get audio and visual turn-by-turn directions with Sprint Navigation
- Download stereo-quality songs from the Sprint Music Store directly to your phone
- Find, download, and buy software, games, ringtones, graphics, and other applications through the Sprint PCS Software Store

Tech Specs

- Dual-band, CDMA2000 1X/EVDO, Rev. A-upgradeable
- Up to 4.1 hours talk time
- 256MB ROM, 64MB RAM
- Memory expandable with microSD card; 512MB microSD card included in the box
- Sliding QWERTY keyboard
- Wi-Fi
- 2.8-inch color touchscreen
- Bluetooth® 2.0 with stereo support
- 2MP camera with camcorder
- 5.8 ounces
- 4.3 x 2.3 x 0.7 inches (HxWxD)

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TAKEAWAY
Now in black, the Centro is light on the pocketbook and in the pocket.

Palm Centro

Doesn't it make sense that a basic yet powerful smartphone would become available in black, a basic yet powerful color? The newest Palm Centro from AT&T Wireless is a smartphone for everyone. Priced affordably, the Centro is both the perfect entry-level smartphone for the whole family and a great second smartphone for businesspeople who prefer to have two phones to keep work and play separate.

The Palm Centro (also available in Glacier White) recently passed the 1 million mark in sales, a testament to its inviting design and solid feature set. With a full QWERTY keyboard and touchscreen in a small, smooth, lightweight package, the Centro is both unobtrusive and ready for action. It handles email, instant messaging, and Push-to-Talk and EDGE class 10 connectivity for fast data transfers.

Key Facts

- Includes a 1.3MP camera with 2X zoom and video capture capability
- Provides access to AT&T Mall, AT&T Music, MobiTV®, and Music ID
- Supports TeleNav GPS Navigator™ and XM Satellite Radio when you're in a supported coverage area

Tech Specs

- GSM/GPRS/EDGE quad-band (850/900/1800/1900MHz)
- Up to four hours talk time
- Up to 300 hours standby time
- 64MB available storage, expandable up to 4GB with microSD card
- 2.2-inch, 320- x 320-pixel touchscreen display
- Bluetooth® 1.2
- Infrared
- Multiconnector
- 4.4 ounces
- 4.22 x 2.11 x 0.73 inches (HxWxD)

palm

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TAKEAWAY
This smartphone won't let international borders slow you down.

Samsung ACE

Don't let its good looks fool you; the new Samsung ACE from Sprint is a fitting companion for the hardiest of world travelers. With operating capabilities that include support for CDMA and GSM/GPRS networks, as well as the domestic Sprint Mobile Broadband Network, ACE users can make clear voice calls in approximately 180 countries and access their private and professional email, surf the Web, and view their online documents in almost 100 nations.

Of course, the ACE's versatility isn't its only benefit. It combines easy access to exclusive Sprint content, such as Sprint TVSM, a full QWERTY keyboard, TFT color display, internal antenna, 1.3MP camera and camcorder, and slide click wheel into an ultra-slim, ultra-light form factor. The ACE also supports up to 2GB of external storage space with a microSD card slot.

Key Facts

- Operates on Sprint Mobile Broadband Network in the U.S., with domestic voice and data roaming on CDMA networks and international roaming on GSM/GPRS networks with Sprint agreements
- Supports wireless access to Microsoft® Outlook® via direct connection to Microsoft® Exchange Server 2003, as well as access to commercial POP3 and IMAP accounts
- Includes Windows Media® Player 10 Mobile for music and video playback on the device and seamless interaction with Windows Media® Player 10 on Windows® XP computers

Tech Specs

- CDMA/EVDO (800/1900MHz); GSM/GPRS (900/1800MHz)
- Qualcomm MSM6500 chipset
- 64MB RAM; 128MB ROM
- Windows Mobile® 6 Standard OS
- Up to 4.3 hours of continuous digital talk time
- 2.3-inch TFT display with 65,000 colors and 320 x 240 resolution
- 3.9 ounces
- 4.65 x 2.32 x 0.46 inches (HxWxD)

$199.99 after discounts with two-year contract | Sprint | www.sprint.com

TAKEAWAY
The updated lightweight MacBook Pro offers 802.11n and more.

Courtesy of Apple

15-inch MacBook Pro

Apple's latest 15-inch MacBook Pro includes significant improvements over the prior models. The most notable addition to the MacBook Pro is the new Multi-Touch trackpad, which provides the same functionality as the trackpad of the MacBook Air and the screen of the iPhone. With the Multi-Touch trackpad, users navigate on-screen items by making a variety of gestures, such as pinching the fingers together to zoom out or spreading them apart to zoom in.

The MacBook Pro also features a 15.4-inch antiglare widescreen TFT (thin film transistor) LED (light-emitting diode) backlit display with a native 1,440- x 900-pixel resolution and millions of colors. The MacBook Pro is lightweight (just 5.4 pounds) and slim (just 1 inch thick). Apple offers the 15-inch MacBook Pro in three basic configurations: with a 2.4GHz Intel® Core™ 2 Duo with 3MB on-chip shared L2 cache, a 2.5GHz Intel® Core™ 2 Duo with 6MB L2 cache, or a 2.6GHz Intel® Core™ 2 Duo with 6MB L2 cache.

Key Facts

- Features the new Multi-Touch trackpad
- Provides a built-in iSight Web cam for on-the-go videoconferencing
- Includes built-in AirPort Extreme wireless card, which supports 802.11n draft specification

Tech Specs

- 15.4-inch widescreen TFT LED backlit display
- 5 pounds, 6 ounces
- 2.6GHz, 2.5GHz, or 2.4GHz Intel Core 2 Duo processor
- Mac OS X 10.5 Leopard
- 2GB DDR2-667
- 200GB or 250GB 5400rpm SATA drive (optional 200GB 7200rpm drive)
- 8x (DVD+/-R DL, DVD+/-RW, CD-RW) optical drive
- AirPort Extreme Wireless Card (with support for 802.11n draft specification); 10/100/1000BASE-T Gigabit Ethernet
- Bluetooth 2.1 + EDR
- FireWire 400 x1, FireWire 800 x1, Hi-Speed USB x2, ExpressCard/34 slot
- Integrated iSight Web cam
- Built-in stereo speakers and omnidirectional microphone
- Full-sized backlit keyboard with ambient light sensor
- Solid-state Multi-Touch trackpad

$1,999 base price | Apple | www.apple.com

TAKEAWAY
The X300 is the thinnest and lightest feature-packed 13-inch widescreen notebook.

ThinkPad X300

It might look like your ordinary basic black, but Lenovo's new ThinkPad X300 is downright green. Its Energy Star 4.0 qualification and EPEAT Gold rating indicate the X300 is environmentally friendly, and you'll appreciate the results in the form of extra-long battery life. You'll also enjoy the X300's bright, backlit, mercury-free display, which at 13.3 inches offers a perfect middle ground between ultra-compact and larger models.

Inside the ThinkPad X300, innovations abound. There's the standard Wi-Fi and Bluetooth® 2.0+EDR built in and ready to go, but there's also UWB (Ultra Wideband), a solid-state drive, and GPS with Verizon's WWAN service as an option. Outside there are innovations, too: The X300 incorporates Lenovo's ThinkPad roll cage technology for durability, and we love the backlit buttons. At just 0.73 inch thick and weighing in at less than 3 pounds, the X300 proves that less can truly mean more.

Key Facts

- Uses Li-Polymer batteries, which make for long life and portability
- Includes a solid-state drive; such drives have no moving parts for added durability
- Features built-in GPS with Verizon's WWAN service as an option

Tech Specs

- 13.3-inch widescreen mercury-free LCD
- 2.93 pounds with standard (3-cell Li-Polymer) battery
- 1.2GHz Intel® Core™ Duo processor SL7100
- Windows Vista® Ultimate 32/Business 32 or Windows® XP Professional preloaded; others available
- 4GB PC2-5300/667MHz maximum memory
- 64GB solid-state drive
- Ultrathin DVD Burner
- Intel® Wireless Wi-Fi Link 4965AG/4965AGN, Intel® UltraWideBand, Gigabit Ethernet, Bluetooth® 2.0+EDR
- Fingerprint reader

lenovo

$2,799 base price | Lenovo | www.lenovo.com

TAKEAWAY
Didn't want to mess with firing up a bulky notebook on your last flight? Try this.

VAIO UX Premium Micro PC

Finally, an ultra-small computer that's packed with all the features you need to stay connected and productive while traveling. Using Wi-Fi (802.11a/b/g) for local wireless connectivity and AT&T's wireless EDGE network for WAN (wide-area networking) nationwide, Sony's VAIO® UX Premium Micro PC will keep you in touch with the rest of the world. The UX also features Bluetooth® for connecting with wireless accessories and performing short-range data transfers.

For frequent-flyer business travelers, the VAIO® UX Premium Micro PC offers a wealth of worthwhile features. In addition to the simple benefit of running Windows Vista® and full-sized applications in a handheld device, the computer's solid-state drive makes for fast boot times and durability (both especially handy for in-flight use). The UX also has a Bluetooth® GPS receiver, 1GB memory, and 48GB storage capacity. Plus, you can even enjoy videos on its 4.5-inch screen.

Key Facts

- Has a compact design with dimensions of 3.74 x 5.91 x 1.27 inches (HxWxD)
- Provides Wi-Fi, cellular, and Bluetooth® wireless connectivity
- Gives your thumbs a break with its 64-key keyboard; offers security with a biometric fingerprint sensor
- Is Windows® sound system-compatible and includes built-in speakers and microphone

Tech Specs

- 4.5-inch SVGA (Super Video Graphics Array) touchscreen LCD
- 1.2 pounds with standard (Li-Ion) battery
- 1.2GHz Intel® Core™ 2 Solo Processor U2200 Ultra Low Voltage
- Windows Vista® Business
- 1GB PC2-3200 memory; 251MB graphics memory
- 48GB solid-state drive; optional Memory Stick Duo™ media
- Ultrathin DVD Burner
- Intel® PRO/Wireless 3945ABG Network Connection (802.11a/b/g); integrated WAN (wide-area network) using AT&T's EDGE network; Ethernet
- Bluetooth®
- USB 2.0 port
- Port replicator connector
- Bluetooth® GPS receiver
- Two cameras positioned on the front (0.3MP) and back (1.3MP)

SONY

$2,499.99 base price | Sony | www.sonystyle.com

TAKEAWAY
Get the most up-to-date maps and traffic information with this device.

GO 920

GPS navigation is handy, but the functionality doesn't have to stop there. The TomTom GO 920 does much more than just point-to-point routing with its Map Share Technology, hands-free car kit, and FM transmitter. Thanks to data submitted from the company's wide user base throughout the country, Map Share ensures you always have the most up-to-date maps available. Should you find yourself in need of emergency assistance during a trip, the TomTom Help Me menu will help you find a hospital or repair shop. Because the device has preloaded maps of the U.S., Canada, and Europe, you'll be ready to travel right out of the box.

Key Facts

- Play music and navigation instructions over your car's stereo using the built-in FM transmitter
- Make changes to the map and share those changes with others using TomTom Map Share Technology
- Speak the address to which you want to drive and the GO 920 will automatically calculate the route
- Use the GO 920 as a hands-free car kit via Bluetooth® with dual-microphone support and built-in full duplex speaker

TOMTOM

$549.95 | TomTom | www.tomtom.com

My Mobile

The Latest Updates & Services For Your Mobile Phone

Staying up-to-date with the latest software and service updates for your phone can be tedious and time-consuming. We're here to help with information about the latest features and enhancements that apply to your mobile phone and carrier.

The Wireless World Goes Flat

In what it calls a "game-changing" introduction, Verizon Wireless announced a new flat-rate plan that gives customers unlimited calling to anyone at anytime for $99.99 per month.

Falling in line like dominoes, AT&T, T-Mobile, and Sprint released their own unlimited plans in response to the Verizon Wireless plan. Each company's unlimited plan costs just under $100 per month. T-Mobile differentiates itself by offering unlimited messaging in addition to unlimited voice minutes. Unlimited messaging includes SMS (Short Message Service) text messages, MMS (Multimedia Messaging Service) picture messages, and IM (instant message).

Upgrade your Sprint Mogul to get Sprint Navigation and EVDO Rev. A support.

Sprint is hoping to outshine its competitors' plans with its Simply Everything plan, which includes unlimited voice, data, text, email, Web surfing, Sprint TV, Sprint Music, GPS Navigation, Direct Connect, and Group Connect. In addition, Sprint is offering an incremental $5 discount for each additional line with a Simply Everything plan. For example, two lines will cost $194.98 per month ($99.99 plus $94.99), and a third line will run an additional $89.99 per month.

Regional carriers are following the example set by national carriers: Alltel introduced its own National Freedom Unlimited Plan, though the company didn't issue a press release, perhaps because it didn't want to detract focus from its My Circle offerings. U.S. Cellular also has an Unlimited National Plan for $99.99 per month.

Along with the flat-rate announcement, Verizon Wireless revealed its new BroadbandAccess Plans, with options that let you choose 50MB of data usage for $39.99 per month or 5GB of data usage for $59.99 per month.

Speed Up Your Mogul

Now that Sprint's network supports EVDO (Evolution Data Optimized) Rev. A, it's time for a handset to do so, as well. Sprint introduced its first EVDO Rev. A-capable handset by means of an upgrade to the HTC Mogul. After installing the new ROM, you'll enjoy average download speeds of 600Kbps to 1.4Mbps, compared to the previous speeds of 400 to 700Kbps. With EVDO Rev. A, average upload speeds will increase from 50 to 70Kbps to 350 to 500Kbps.

Available from www.america.htc.com/mogulupdate, the new software ROM also adds a number of features, including advanced GPS functionality, a Task Manager for the Today screen, and better Bluetooth performance. Along with advanced GPS functionality, you get software for Sprint Navigation. The update also corrects an issue that erases Windows Live Messenger content when the device power cycles.

HTC recommends allowing about 25 minutes for this update to install. This ROM update erases all personal data stored on your device, so be sure to back up all photos, documents, and other important files before installing.

Apple Talks Business, Third-Party Apps

Shortly after Apple's hyped announcements of an SDK (Software Development Kit), third-party apps, and

Image courtesy of Apple

Soon, Apple's iPhone will offer full Microsoft Exchange support, additional mail features, and security enhancements.

You can view captions of your conversations using Sprint's WebCapTel service.

support for Microsoft Exchange Servers 2003 and 2007, Apple dropped the bomb that these features won't be available until the iPhone/iPod touch 2.0 software update, which is expected by the end of June. The free beta iPhone SDK is available now, though. Even though we won't get to enjoy the new features right away, Apple did tell us more about what we can expect.

Through Microsoft Exchange and ActiveSync support, the iPhone will support all features that other Exchange devices support. This means that email will integrate with Apple's Mail application, and calendar and contacts will integrate into their respective iPhone applications.

New mail features will also come with the update, including the ability to view Word, Excel, and PowerPoint attachments and the ability to delete and move multiple email messages at once.

Along with Exchange support, the iPhone update will let you wipe information from the device remotely in the event your phone is lost or stolen. Password policies and auto-discovery are also enabled. To provide encrypted access to private corporate networks, Cisco IPsec VPN (virtual private network) is also included.

To make setup easier for businesses, a configuration utility in the iPhone 2.0 software lets IT administrators set up multiple iPhones quickly and easily by installing certificates and defining password policies, VPN settings, and email server settings.

Rolled in with the update, you can expect to see App Store, parental controls, and more. Similar to iTunes' Music Store, TV Store, and Movie Stores, App Store will provide the means to deliver software to the devices. The App Store will be accessible through EDGE (Enhanced Data for GSM [Global System for Mobile Communications] Evolution) and Wi-Fi on the iPhone and through Wi-Fi on the iPod touch. You will also be able to access the App Store through iTunes on your computer.

Selected developers have been given early access to the SDK. As a result, EA Games announced a version of Spore for the iPhone and iPod touch, Sega Mobile announced a version of Super Monkey Ball, and AOL announced that AIM (AOL Instant Messenger) will be ported to the iPhone.

This update will be free to iPhone users, while iPod touch users will have to pay.

New Firmware For Verizon Wireless Q9m

Motorola issued a new firmware update for the Verizon Wireless Q9m. Although few details were available about this update as we went to press, it appears that it will upgrade the Windows Mobile 6 version from AKU (Adaptation Kit Update) 0.2 to AKU 0.6. AKUs update Windows Mobile, similar to how Service Packs update Microsoft Windows. Look for the update on Motorola's Web site.

View Your Conversations

Sprint released Sprint WebCapTel, a free Web-based service that lets you read captions of your cellular voice calls using a Web browser. Designed for users who are hard of hearing, this service captures the audio of the person you are speaking with and translates the spoken words into text, virtually in real time. This service is available almost anywhere you can access the Internet on a computer and talk on the phone. After you finish the phone call, you can save the conversation for review.

Get AAA On Your BlackBerry

BlackBerry 8830 World Edition and BlackBerry Pearl 8130 smartphone users can now access valuable AAA travel information directly from their handsets, thanks to AAA Mobile and Networks In Motion. With the software and a monthly subscription of $9.99, you can access visual and audible directions to any travel destination in the U.S., locate AAA Approved POIs (points of interest), and search more than 100,000 locations that offer AAA cardholder discounts. You'll find AAA Diamond Rated hotels and restaurants included in the POI listings. You can also bookmark POIs for quick recall in the future. Should you have car troubles while you are on the road, AAA Mobile can send your GPS location to AAA and connect you to the company for roadside assistance services. For instructions on how to get AAA Mobile, go to www.aaa.com/aaamobile.

by Jennifer Johnson

You can now get AAA Mobile for your BlackBerry 8830 World Edition and BlackBerry Pearl 8130.

The Traveler's MOBILE TOOLKIT

Don't Leave Home Without It

It's a long road, they say. Whether you take to business travel like a dog to mud or just try to grin and bear it until you can go back home, some gadgets can make your trip more productive and enjoyable.

We will delve into specific drawers of the ultimate traveler's toolkit in the articles that follow, but here's a glance at some of the devices, software, and accessories you will find.

Stock Up

On short trips or long trips, for business or for pleasure, you'll be glad you stocked your own personal mobile toolkit.

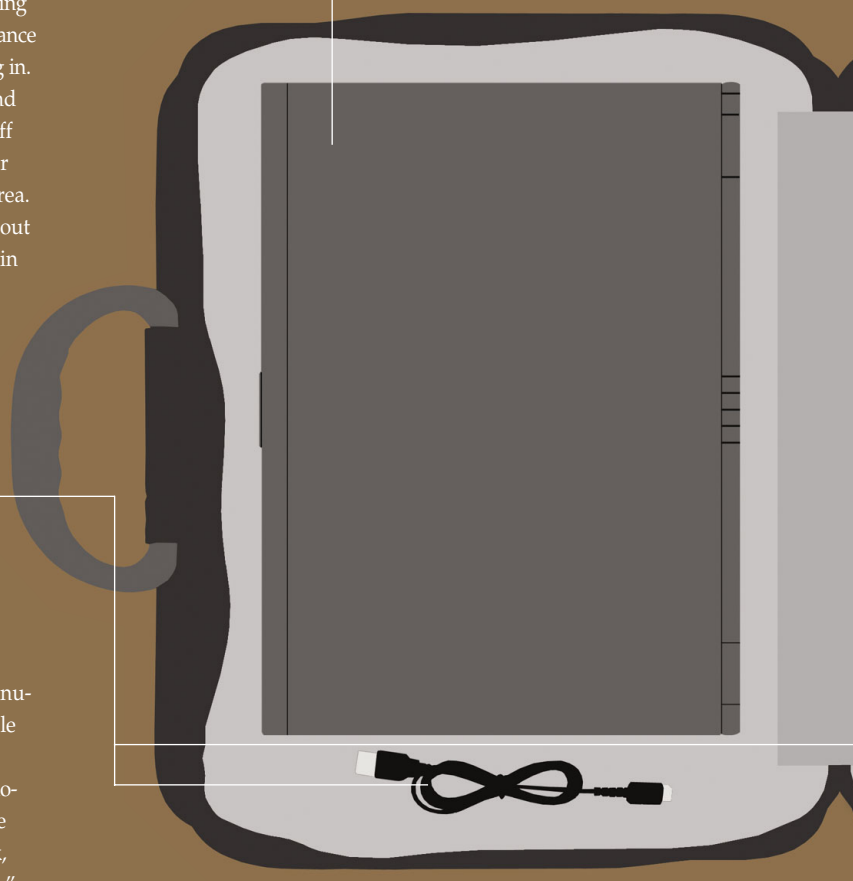
by Marty Sems

Wi-Fi Access

From airports to hotel rooms, from coffee shops to end-of-day watering holes (er, of course we mean executive clubs) . . . wherever you get a chance to settle for a few minutes, your thoughts naturally turn toward logging in.

But before you dig out your laptop, clear off a spot on the table, and wait several minutes for your notebook to boot up, you'll want to sniff the air, so to speak. Pull out your handy Wi-Fi detector to see whether there are any suitable WLANs (wireless local-area networks) in the area.

Wi-Fi finders are incredibly useful devices in this wireless age. About the size of a key fob, they can typically detect 802.11b/g/n networks in the area, as well as the signal strength of each. The better finders also tell you whether the WLANs they find are encrypted or open to any traffic. For more information on Wi-Fi access, check out "Where's Wi-Fi?" on page 24.



Accessories

Gizmos seem to breed, don't they? Laptops spawn extra batteries and AC adapters. Phones and PDAs give birth to rechargers. Digital cameras accumulate litters of memory cards. Good thing you bought a bag, eh?

Don't be caught without a backup device, such as a USB-powered portable hard drive. Even a USB flash memory drive from a good manufacturer can act in this role, now that many are big enough and reliable enough to entrust with your data.

Portable chargers are handy when you know you'll be using your mobile devices for extended periods away from AC outlets. And then there are Bluetooth headsets for your phone, wireless mice for your notebook, and so on. Accessorize on page 40 with "Smart Packing, Easy Traveling."

Software

Of course, your laptop and smartphone aren't much use without the right software, especially if you are on the road. When you do find a wireless hotspot with your Wi-Fi detector, you'll need VPN (virtual private network) software to dial into your home office's server, online collaboration and conferencing software to carry on work with distant colleagues, and an Internet phone service to call home cheaply. Encryption and theft recovery programs can give you peace of mind, and security software, such as a firewall and anti-malware, can keep you safe from worms and hackers.

If you are on a road trip, GPS software on your smartphone or handheld computer can keep you on the right track. Mapping software also can come in handy when you're traveling abroad, where you might not be able to count on accurate coverage from free map sites such as Google Maps or MapQuest. Flip ahead to "Software For Your Notebook" (on page 30) and "Software For Your Smartphone" (on page 32) for closer looks at all sorts of useful software.

Cases

It's pretty obvious, but it bears a mention: If you travel with electronic gizmos, you need to protect them. A good notebook bag can be as simple as a slim folio or as multifunctional as an overhead compartment bag with roller wheels and a retractable handle. And a padded case for your smartphone, PDA, or entertainment device can act as cheap insurance against gadget-killing bumps and bruises.

Cases and bags also can provide retaining mechanisms, such as belt clips, and carry mechanisms, such as straps and handles. Even better, many provide storage space for accessories with one or more pockets. "Made To Travel" on page 36 is the place to turn.

Diversions

Stuck for entertainment? Those multimedia gadgets you brought along are pretty useless if you're tired of the music and movies.

Enterprising companies such as InMotion Entertainment (www.inmotionpictures.com) offer rentals of DVDs and portable players in various airports. Amazon's Kindle electronic book reader ($399; www.amazon.com) lets you buy and download ebooks through an EVDO connection. Many personal music players support audiobooks in various formats, such as Audible and MP3. "Diversions" on page 38 has even more ideas for you.

Of course, you could always buy a book at the airport. Or pick up next month's edition of *PC Today*.

Multimedia Devices

For the downtime on your trip, bring along some music and movies. Your notebook can act as a portable DVD player, although a standalone player can spare your computer's battery so it will be ready when you need to work. An iPod or similar personal music player can pack along thousands of your favorite songs to make you feel right at home. And if it's video-enabled, you can bring small-screen fun on your trip without the bulk of DVDs.

"Multimedia Devices" on page 44 has much, much more. Of course, multimedia devices simply cry out for . . .

Headphones

. . . earbuds or headphones. After all, you don't really need to share your "Heroes" fix with the rest of the airplane.

Earbuds win the award for pocketability, and thus portability. On the other hand, many discriminating travelers prefer the better bass and comfort of padded, earcup-style 'phones. Many such headphones fold up for compact carry, making them more attractive when you're trying to travel with just an overnight bag.

Better still, many headphones feature active noise cancellation, which can really reduce the droning sound of jet engines (and the fatiguing effects of listening to them for hours on end). If all this sounds good to you, check out "Less Noise, More Solitude" on page 46.

Where's The WI-FI?

Make The Connection On The Road

Since 2006, when Wi-Fi information and services firm JiWire (www.jiwire.com) proclaimed Wi-Fi hotspots had topped the 100,000 mark globally, the list of hotspot locations has continued heading skyward. As of March, JiWire reports there were nearly 250,000 free and for-pay hotspot locations in 136 countries. (That number isn't 100% all-inclusive, but JiWire's registry is likely the most comprehensive available.)

The good news for U.S. travelers is that more than a quarter of those hotspot locations (67,187 as of March) are located stateside. Nevertheless, coverage is far from ubiquitous, even in densely populated urban areas where hotspots are most common. For example, Portland, Ore., the No. 1 hotspot city per capita, according to the *Forbes* (www.forbes.com) 2008 America's Most Wired Cities report, boasts only six hotspots per square mile, on average. (With an area of 134.3 square miles, per City-Data.com, Portland has approximately 837 hotspots, per JiWire.)

Factor in the realities that many hotspots have a range of 300 feet or less and that hotspots cluster where people congregate, and the picture turns into a surrealist landscape. Without advanced planning or the right tools, you can easily find yourself stranded in a Wi-Fi desert. The nearest Wi-Fi oasis might be only 1,000 feet away, but you'll never know it's there.

Surfin' USA

How can you prevent the grim scenario depicted above? One possibility is JiWire's Wi-Fi Hotspot Helper for Windows XP ($24.95 per year; www.jiwire.com/hotspot-helper.htm). The device locates nearby Wi-Fi access points by cross-referencing your location against a database—stored offline on your PC—of more than 200,000 verified hotspots. Bonus features are a Wi-Fi mailer, which moves email through blocked hotspots, and enterprise-grade encryption and firewall security. The trial is free, but Vista users are out of luck. If you are a Skype or iPhone user, JiWire also offers a free finder utility without the security and email perks.

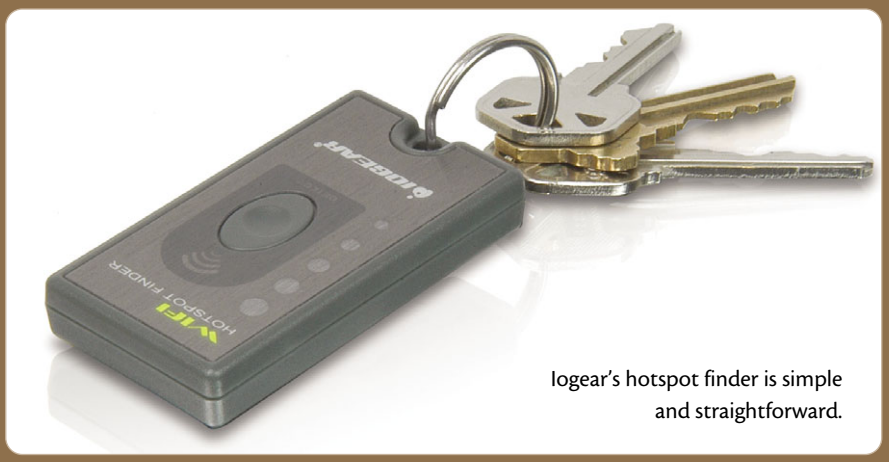
If you would rather map out hotspot locations before you leave home, or before leaving your last hotspot, JiWire's searchable online database can assist. We also like sites such as WiFinder (www.wifinder.com), a good place for state-by-state searches; Wi-Fi Free Spot (www.wififreespot.com) or Open WiFi Spots (www.openwifispots.com), each of which are great Web sites for free Wi-Fi locations; and *PC Today*'s own Wi-Fi hotspot directory (www.pctoday.com). Open WiFi Spots offers category guides, such as restaurants, public parks, and municipalities, and interactive mapping of Wi-Fi locations to get you going.

Several major restaurant and retail chains, including McDonald's (www.mcdonalds.com), Borders Books (www.borders.com), and Barnes & Noble (www.barnesandnoble.com), offer fee-based Wi-Fi. At Panera Bread (www.panerabread.com) and hundreds of other cafés and fast-food restaurants, Wi-Fi is free. At Starbucks, a $5 Starbucks Card (for which you get $5 in purchase value) will soon give you two free hours per day of Internet usage. Companies such as Wayport (www.wayport.com) and Boingo (www.boingo.com), which often power the Wi-Fi at hotels, restaurants, and retailers, offer prepaid cards or subscriptions that give you access at any of their locations.

The Friendly Skies

Although it's unlikely you can have your pick of airports, a little planning can help you make the most of the Wi-Fi-friendly ones. Have a layover in Atlanta? Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport tops the *Forbes* Top 30 Most-Wired Airports report (February 2008), with airport-wide Wi-Fi access via five providers. Heading to Las Vegas, Denver, or Phoenix? *Forbes*' No. 1, No. 2, and No. 3 most Wi-Fi-friendly airports, respectively, all offer free hotspot access. If you have a layover in an airport that lacks Wi-Fi, you may be able to get it through your airline. Delta's Crown Room Clubs and American Airline's Admirals Clubs, for instance, offer free T-Mobile Wi-Fi; many locations offer day passes for purchase for nonmembers.

ZyXEL's Wi-Fi sniffer can also turn your PC into a wireless access point.



Iogear's hotspot finder is simple and straightforward.

A Room To Roam

If you want to surf wirelessly in the most locations, make sure your hotel offers Wi-Fi. According to JiWire, hotels top the list of hotspot locations, with over 48,000 worldwide. A few years ago, luxury and upscale convention hotels such as the Adam's Mark Dallas and the Emirates Palace Abu Dhabi led the charge to wireless access, but today you'll find Wi-Fi in more humble abodes, as well.

According to Wi-Fi Free Spot, nearly 50 hotel chains or groups offer Wi-Fi, although not all locations have it. Those that offer free Wi-Fi access in most locations range from the budget-priced (AmeriSuites, Staybridge Suites, La Quinta Inns, Homewood Suites, and others) to higher-end hotels. Some offer lobby and public-area access only; others offer guest room access only; a few offer both.

Sniff It Out

If you prefer to head out with no plan for Wi-Fi access, a Wi-Fi locator tool will let you find a network without the hassle of setting up your notebook. The Canary Wireless Digital Hotspotter ($59.95; canarywireless.com) is one of the more expensive sniffers, and it is one of our favorites. It provides a useful, scroll-through information display including network ID, security (encrypted or open, locked or unlocked), encryption type, type (802.11b/g/n), and number of access points (with you connecting to the one you prefer) for all the networks within range.

Iogear's Wi-Fi HotSpot Finder ($34.95; www.iogear.com) is more basic, with a light-up indicator that shows signal strength if it finds a network (802.11b/g only). Nevertheless, its one-button simplicity will appeal to on-the-go sniffers who don't want to evaluate a lot of data. Kensington's key fob-style Wi-Fi Finder Plus ($29.99; us.kensington.com) parallels Iogear's in functionality but can also sniff out Bluetooth devices and includes a tiny flashlight.

One other product we like, ZyXEL's AG-225H Wi-Fi Finder and USB Adapter ($79.99; us.zyxel.com), performs double duty. Away from your notebook, it sniffs out Wi-Fi signals (802.11 a/b/g/n) and provides a display similar to that of the Canary product. Plug it into your notebook, and it turns the PC into a Wi-Fi access point that can connect to 802.11 a/b/g (but not 802.11n) networks.

Wi-Fi On The Go

Now that you know where and how to find Wi-Fi on the road, you should be set to go. However, although Wi-Fi security wasn't the focus of this article, it is something to consider. Most free Wi-Fi is unsecured, and even networks that require login are not always encrypted. For that reason, a good firewall (with file sharing turned off) is a must if you surf unsecured. One last thing: If you see ads on a free Wi-Fi connection, don't be concerned you're being spammed or attacked. Ad-supported Wi-Fi, led by JiWire and its Ads For Access program, is catching on. It may soon enable companies to bring free, secure Wi-Fi to more locations than we ever dreamed possible.

by Jennifer Farwell

Notebook SETUP

Wi-Fi, Your Laptop & You

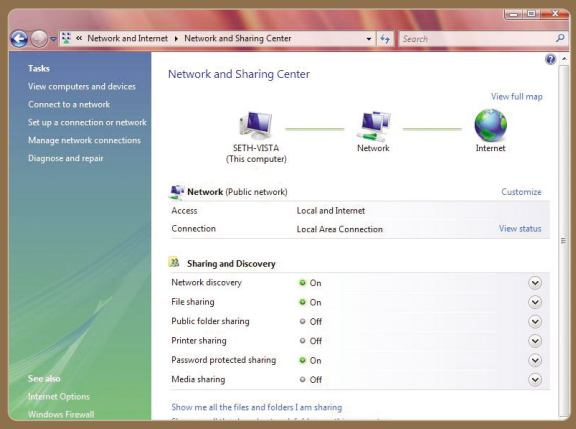
Using your laptop to access a Wi-Fi network while on the road is usually as simple as finding an open network. The majority of notebooks now have wireless cards built in, and if yours doesn't have one, you can easily add an inexpensive external wireless card. At home, creating and securing your own network is also simple.

Because wireless connectivity is so user-friendly these days, many people don't actually understand how the connections are made or how they work. Knowing how everything works together is valuable, because you'll have some insight as to how you can troubleshoot any wireless problems you may encounter.

The Wireless Radio

A wireless radio is a transmitter that resides on a wireless card. Many laptops have a wireless radio located somewhere inside the unit; however, some are built into cards that a user can plug into a PCI (Peripheral Component Interconnect) or ExpressCard slot on his laptop. The wireless radio's job is simple: to transmit and receive radio signals. When these radio signals are transmitted from a network router to the chip in your computer, a Wi-Fi connection results, granting you access to the Internet via that connection.

There are two places on a laptop where you can find and manipulate your wireless radio. Your computer will have a switch for the wireless radio somewhere on the outside of the case, or it will be inside the computer, accessible only from the user interface when the computer is running. In either case, an indicator light on your laptop will show whether the wireless radio is on or off. Generally, this indicator will appear in a bank with other lighted gauges that give information about your system, such as battery power.



With Windows Vista's Network And Sharing Center, many network tasks are automated.

If your laptop has an external switch, turning the radio on and off is simple; just slide the switch to the desired position. If your laptop lacks an external switch, you'll need to turn on your computer and locate the icon that represents the quality of your Wi-Fi reception (it looks like four vertical bars) on the System Tray at the bottom right of your display. Right-click the icon and select Disable Radio. A red X will appear over the icon, indicating that the radio is disabled. To

If your laptop doesn't have an internal wireless card, consider using an external card such as the Belkin Wireless G Plus MIMO Notebook Card ($59.99; www.belkin.com).

enable the wireless radio, right-click the same icon and select Enable Radio.

The Connection

A router transmits a network's signal via radio waves. The wireless card in (or on) the computer receives the signal, which enables you to use the network's bandwidth to access the Internet.

With an unsecured connection, any wireless radio within signal range can connect to the network; it's a simple matter of sending and receiving radio waves. A secure connection uses encryption such as WEP (Wired Equivalent Privacy) or WPA (Wi-Fi Protected Access) to ensure that only users with an encryption key can access the network.

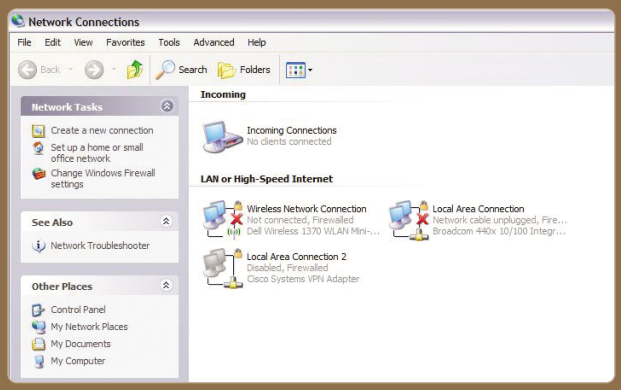
Connect With Windows XP/Vista

If your wireless radio is turned on, it will automatically search for available Wi-Fi networks when you boot your computer. Each time you connect to a network, WinXP adds it to your preferred list. You can adjust the order of preferred networks by clicking Start, Control Panel, and Network And Internet Connections. Click Network Connections, right-click Wireless Network Connection, and select Properties. When the Properties dialog box appears, click the Wireless Networks tab and adjust the order of your preferred networks accordingly. For example, move your home network to the top of the list so your computer always looks to connect to that network first.

Vista computers operate in the same manner, with the exception that Vista's Network And Sharing Center has more automated features to streamline connecting and troubleshooting.

Choose From Multiple Available Hotspots

When presented with a number of networks from which to choose, you should always choose the network that is most secure while offering the best reception. (If you're at home, this would be your own secure network connection.)



From Windows XP's Network Connections dialog box, you can set or adjust all your network settings.

When out and about, be on the lookout for evil twins, which are networks with official-sounding names that have been set up by ne'er-do-wells in an attempt to pilfer information from you. For example, if you're sitting in a coffee shop, look for the network with that establishment's SSID (Service Set Identifier), or name. It would be a good idea to ask for that information from an employee, a task you may need to take care of anyway to get a WEP or WPA password.

Troubleshoot A Connection

Because Wi-Fi operates on radio frequencies, interference can occur easily. Both 802.11b and 802.11g, the most commonly used Wi-Fi protocols, operate at 2.4GHz. Any appliance or device that operates at that frequency, such as a cordless phone or a microwave, can interfere with your Wi-Fi signal. To avoid this type of problem, position your computer as far away from such devices as possible.

If you're getting a weak signal and you have a wireless adapter with an adjustable antenna, you can toy with the position of the computer and/or the antenna to get a better signal. Such devices also tend to get better reception than typical internal cards and external cards with no antenna.

There are a number of things that can cause a failed connection. If you're attempting to connect to a network away from home (such as a network for which you are not the administrator), the list of possible culprits decreases significantly. Check whether your wireless radio is enabled or if there is an available network that is either open or for which you have an encryption key.

On your home network, any of the above solutions may work, but you also need to double-check your network to ensure the router is on.

For all of your wireless networking devices, you'll also want to make sure the drivers are up-to-date. Manufacturers routinely upgrade, update, or patch their products. If you don't have the latest drivers installed, your gear may not work properly. Many companies will provide updates automatically, but if you're having connection problems that you can't solve, check the manufacturer's Web site for any new drivers.

When all else fails, it never hurts to restart your computer and router. If you have an external card, remove it and firmly reinsert it before rebooting. A simple system reset solves many problems that otherwise might seem insurmountable.

by Seth Colaner

Smartphone SETUP

A Wi-Fi User's Guide

Wi-Fi access, it seems, is just about everywhere. If you recently purchased a Wi-Fi-enabled handset or plan to do so, you'll be glad to know that hopping on the Internet via Wi-Fi doesn't have to be difficult.

How It Works

Phone manufacturers enable Wi-Fi access in their devices the same way they enable cellular connectivity: They install a chip embedded with a radio that can send and receive a transmission over a particular type of network. (In this case, 802.11 or Wi-Fi.) In most consumer-grade Wi-Fi phones available in the U.S., the cellular and Wi-Fi radios in a device do not interact with each other, although some phones can transfer your Internet connection from Wi-Fi to cellular if the Wi-Fi connection's signal drops. T-Mobile's @Home service (www.theonlyphoneyouneed.com), which lets voice calls roam from Wi-Fi to cellular range and back again, is an exception to this rule.

This does not mean you cannot make calls using your Wi-Fi connection; you just need specialized VoWiFi (Voice over Wi-Fi) software, such as Skype for Windows Mobile (www.skype.com), to do it. Some Wi-Fi phones support simultaneous usage of voice and data connection; you can surf the Internet at a Wi-Fi hotspot while engaging in a phone call or downloading emails over your cellular connection, for example. If simultaneous voice and data is important to you and you haven't purchased a Wi-Fi smartphone yet, make sure the device has this feature.

Where You'll Find It

Most Wi-Fi phones can connect to any publicly accessible hotspot or, for that matter, to any private Wi-Fi network for which you have access privileges, within a range of approximately 300 feet. Users do not need to seek out hotspots supported by their particular carrier. However, if your carrier has a Wi-Fi network and offers an unlimited hotspot plan, you may find this is the least expensive means to connect securely on a regular basis. At one time, T-Mobile had the

In Windows Mobile, turn on Wi-Fi by selecting or tapping the Wi-Fi icon.

largest Wi-Fi network (close to 9,000 hotspots in the U.S.), but AT&T recently inked a deal with Starbucks that, by year-end, will give it some 17,000 U.S. hotspots.

Many restaurants, hotels, municipalities, airports, and other locations offer secure, fee-based Wi-Fi connections managed by service providers such as Wayport (www.wayport.com). Others offer free Wi-Fi using similar arrangements or over in-house Wi-Fi networks. Beware, though, unless you sign up and create a secure login to use a Wi-Fi service, free probably means unsecured. You can surf without a security net, but we don't recommend it. For more about Wi-Fi hotspots and further assistance finding them, refer to "Where's The Wi-Fi?" on page 24.

All Aboard

No matter what your plans for Wi-Fi, you need to learn how to enable the radio, find a hotspot, and then connect to that hotspot. We used a Windows Mobile 6 smartphone (a T-Mobile Dash) for the steps that follow, but steps should be similar for WM5 devices. (On the Dash, the WM5 interface was identical.) We also include alternate instructions for Pocket PC phones. No matter the model of your phone, the general principles we outline should apply. Some phones, such as Apple's iPhone, have greatly simplified Wi-Fi features.

Turn on the Wi-Fi antenna. Your smartphone's Wi-Fi antenna will likely be turned off by default. If the antenna is on all the time, you waste power and expose your device to prying eyes. When you are ready to turn on the antenna, press (or tap) Start (or Start and Programs) and scroll to (or tap) Comm Manager, Wireless Manager, or a similar option. Scroll to (or tap) Wi-Fi to highlight it. You will see a red X adjacent to the antenna icon. Press the Select button (or tap the icon). The X disappears, indicating that the antenna is on.

Connect to networks. Depending on your phone and settings, you may see a pop-up menu listing available networks. If so, choose a network, indicate whether it is a public (choose Internet) or private (choose Work) network, provide a key if needed, and connect. The next time this network is within range, your smartphone will connect automatically.

If you do not see a pop-up window (these are more common with Pocket PC phones), you can connect manually. With the Wi-Fi icon still highlighted, select Settings and Wi-Fi and then choose Wi-Fi Networks (or Start, Settings, Connections, Wi-Fi, and Wireless) to view available networks. Scroll to (or tap and hold) the desired network and select (or tap) Connect.

With Pocket PC Phones, you'll find Wi-Fi preferences within the Settings menu, rather than directly in the Start menu as you'll find with smartphone devices.

To connect to a secure network, which is indicated by a padlock icon, you will likely need to edit the settings. Scroll to the network and select Menu and Edit (or quickly tap the connection). Depending on the network, you may need to change the network type, adjust the authentication and encryption settings, and provide a network key.

To connect to a network that does not appear but for which you have the connection information, select New (Add New for Pocket PC). Provide the Network Name and other required network settings.

Establish settings. Many phones, especially Pocket PC models, are set by default to automatically scan for new networks. Smartphones may not be. If a smartphone device does not display networks, you can have it scan for available connections. From the Wi-Fi Networks display, select Menu and Wi-Fi Settings. Under Networks To Access, select All Available or Only Access Points. Under Available Network Notification, select On. To have the device continually scan for Wi-Fi networks, change the Turn Off Wi-Fi If Not Connected In setting to Never. (Remember to turn off your antenna manually.) Select Done and connect to an available network as described in the previous "Connect to networks" section. You should now be set to go.

Wi-Fi Walkabout

Using your phone for Wi-Fi access will open up a new world for you. When you become comfortable, explore your phone to see what other options it may have. For example, some phones can connect to LEAP (Lightweight Extensible Authentication Protocol; a type of user-level authentication) networks; many let you create digital certificates (which authenticate you when sending data).

by Jennifer Farwell

Software For YOUR NOTEBOOK

Beyond The Basics

Your notebook probably came with the usual software for browsing the Web, doing work-related tasks, and using multimedia. But because it's portable, your notebook can do things that a desktop computer can't. It also means that you need to protect your notebook if it is lost or stolen.

We gathered some software suggestions for the portable nature of your notebook. Some products are for security, and others are for fun and convenience. All of the products work on Windows XP and Windows Vista systems.

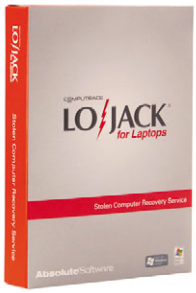
by Carmen Carmack

Absolute Software Computrace LoJack For Laptops

$49.99 for one-year subscription, $99.99 for three-year subscription • lojackforlaptops.com

Computrace LoJack for Laptops is an application and recovery service that helps people find their stolen laptops. The software does this by periodically contacting the Computrace monitoring center when your laptop is connected to the Internet. The process occurs in the background and is not detectable.

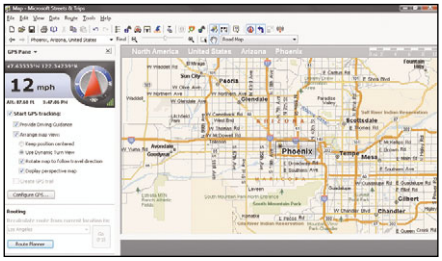
Should someone steal your laptop, you want to notify the Computrace Recovery Team, which puts its system on alert. The next time your laptop has contact with the monitoring system, the alert causes your laptop to begin silently contacting Computrace every 15 minutes when it is connected to the Internet, allowing the Recovery Team time to detect the location of your computer.



Absolute Software reports that its service recovers three out of four stolen computers. The Recovery Team consists of former security professionals and police officers. They work with law enforcement and ISPs to obtain the search warrants and other information necessary to recover your laptop.

Microsoft Streets & Trips 2008

$99.95 (With GPS Locator), $149.95 (With Connected Services)
www.microsoft.com/streets/default.mspx



Two versions of the Microsoft Streets & Trips mapping software bring GPS capabilities to your notebook. Streets & Trips 2008 With GPS Locator comes with a GPS device that attaches to your notebook. The device works with the software to provide spoken directions, speed of travel, and altitude information. Detailed maps of the U.S. and Canada include points of interest such as gas stations, ATMs, and hotels. A trip-planning tool calculates mileage, travel time, and costs, and you can import Outlook contact locations into your maps.

Microsoft Streets & Trips 2008 With Connected Services includes the GPS device, map software, and an MSN Direct receiver. Using an FM signal, MSN Direct sends information about traffic conditions and current gas prices to the receiver attached to your notebook. A one-year subscription to MSN Direct is included with your purchase. Check out coverage areas at streets.msndirect.com.

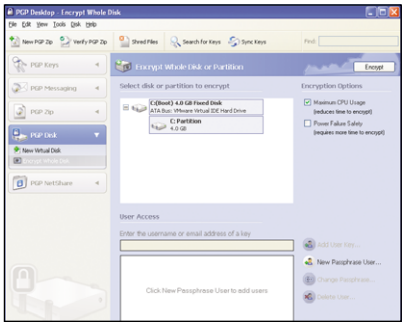
PGP Whole Disk Encryption

$149 for the first year, reduced maintenance price thereafter • www.pgp.com

PGP Whole Disk Encryption locks down the data, software, and system files stored on your notebook. The product uses powerful 256-bit encryption methods to protect your data, making the data unreadable to others.

To access the information on your notebook, you establish and use a secure password. After you sign on to your computer, the encryption and decryption features work in the background. However, if your notebook is lost or stolen, other users can't decrypt the information without your password. PGP Whole Disk Encryption also works with smart card readers as an alternative to password security.

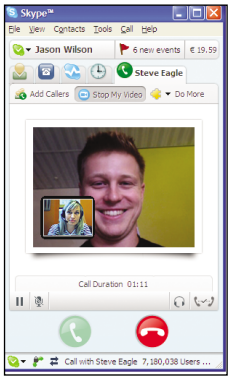
In addition to encrypting information on your notebook's hard drive, PGP Whole Disk Encryption can encrypt external hard drives and removable media such as USB thumb drives. The product also includes a self-decrypting archive feature to encrypt files you send to someone else, and it comes with secure file deletion to permanently remove files from your system. PGP's corporate products integrate with PGP Whole Disk Encryption to enhance security policies and other administrative tasks.



Skype

Free; prices vary for SkypeIn and SkypeOut • www.skype.com

If you want an inexpensive way to stay in touch while you are on the road, Skype VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) software is for you. After you install Skype, which is free, you can use a headset and your notebook to make phone calls over the Internet to other Skype users.



If you have a Web cam, you can also use the Skype service to enjoy free video calls and face-to-face conversations if the recipient of your call also has a Web cam. The Skype Web site provides a number of Web cam recommendations.

If you want to use your notebook to receive non-Skype calls, you can purchase a SkypeIn telephone number for $60 per year or $18 for three months. Calls to your SkypeIn number are treated as a regular local call for the caller, with no additional charge to you. To make outbound non-Skype calls (known as SkypeOut), you can pay as little as 2.1 cents per minute. If you want both capabilities, Skype offers comprehensive calling plans starting at $3 per month.

Steganos Secure Traveler

$139.95 per year or $29.95 per month • www.steganos.com

Designed specifically for mobile security, Steganos Secure Traveler is a software suite that adds security and antitheft protection to your notebook.

This suite features a secure VPN (virtual private network) to encrypt your Internet connections, so other people cannot eavesdrop on your communications at unsecured Wi-Fi hotspots. You also have access to an encrypted safe where you can securely store files on your notebook's hard drive or on portable drives and media, such as USB thumb drives and CDs. You can access Secure Traveler's encrypted password manager and store all of your passwords and automatically invoke them for the appropriate Web sites or software. You also can use the program's shredder feature to permanently delete files from your notebook's hard drive and from portable media. Steganos Secure Traveler includes a Web-based antitheft service, as well. The service keeps a record of your notebook's physical address and can aid in recovery efforts should your computer get stolen.

The subscription limits users to 10GB of data transfer per month, which should be sufficient in most cases. To help you monitor usage, Steganos Secure Traveler includes a data transfer monitoring tool.

Software For YOUR SMARTPHONE

Add-Ons That Can Save Time & Boost Productivity

With a keyboard, microphone, speaker, processor, storage, LCD, and built-in connectivity, a smartphone comes with nearly all the tools you need for a mobile workplace. What's sometimes missing, however, is the software for the job. Most business travelers already have the essential productivity and security applications they need to work while they are on the road, but with a few extra applications, business travelers can use their mobile phones to save time and be more productive. We found several applications that let you use your mobile phone for many other functions, including for travel assistance, as a voice recorder, and to replace translation phrase books. **by Nathan Lake**

3GR Technologies MxCalc Financial Pack

$39.99 • www.3grtech.com

The MxCalc Financial Pack suite consists of MxCalc 10BII (a standard business calculator), MxCalc 12c (a programmable financial calculator), and MxCalc SE (a calculator designed for complex calculations). Although you can purchase each application separately, we found that having the suite of calculators let us select the one that best fit our current computation needs.

MxCalc 10BII offers all the tools you need to calculate interest rates, amortization, price percentages, and many other values for accounting and economic analysis. MxCalc 12c provides more advanced features and offers tools for determining loan payments, standard deviation, and cash flows. For complex figures, MxCalc SE can perform matrices functions, statistical functions, scientific evaluations, and quadratic equations. In short, the MxCalc Financial pack lets you perform business, financial, or even complex math from your mobile phone.

ALK Technologies CoPilot Live 7

$199 for GPS-enabled devices; $299 with Bluetooth GPS receiver • www.alk.com

With CoPilot Live 7 on your mobile phone, you can turn your smartphone into a full-featured GPS navigation tool. CoPilot Live 7 supports mobile phones with built-in GPS. If your phone doesn't have GPS capabilities, you can purchase the CoPilot Live version that comes with a Bluetooth GPS receiver. You can configure CoPilot Live 7 to direct you to specific addresses, points of interest, your home, recent locations, and contacts from your address book. The interface is intuitive and features large, easy-to-select icons. We like the program's clear spoken instructions, which you can configure to indicate as often as 2 miles, 1 mile, and 500 yards away from turns.

The 3D screen perspective lets you see a detailed view of the road ahead, and you can select among a variety of 2D maps for a larger map of the route. One of the best features of CoPilot Live 7 is the Detour feature, which lets you search for an alternate route or configure the application to avoid specific roads. The easy-to-use interface and advanced map features make CoPilot Live 7 ideal for frequent business travelers.

iambic TravelTalk

$14.95 • www.iambic.com

Phrasebooks can be cumbersome to carry, and looking up individual words on a translation Web site takes time. Rather than searching for specific words or phrases, TravelTalk from iambic lists phrase categories, such as Airport And Hotel, Finding Your Way, Sightseeing, and Useful Expressions, that you can reference to find helpful phrases in Spanish, German, French, and Italian. In addition to the full translation of a phrase, TravelTalk provides a detailed pronunciation. For instance, the TravelTalk indicates the translation of "You have the wrong number" in German is "Sie sind falsch verbunden," and without the pronunciation field of "zee zint fahlsh fehr-BUN-den," travelers unfamiliar with the German language may not properly express the phrase.

In terms of design, the phrase categories are displayed in a tree format, so clicking a primary category brings up a list of subcategories. The tree listing made it easy for us to locate the phrase we wanted. TravelTalk also has a search field, so you can quickly gather a number of phrase results relevant to one word. At the bottom of the application, a Favorites button lets you view lists of phrases you commonly use.

Overall, we found TravelTalk was particularly helpful because the simple interface let us find useful phrases within a few clicks.

Ilium Software ListPro

$19.95 • www.iliumsoft.com

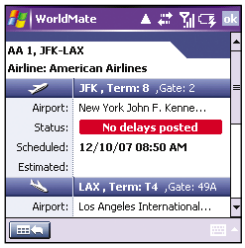
If you rely on to-do lists to keep yourself organized, you'll love ListPro from Ilium Software. Unlike the basic Tasks application on Windows Mobile, ListPro lets you create lists from built-in templates, and you can choose basic templates, such as a shopping list or contact list, or more complex designs, such as meeting agendas (featuring Topic, Action, and Who fields) and monthly project lists. Many of ListPro's templates also feature a checkbox on the left side of the screen that you can use to keep track of your accomplished tasks.

If you wish to customize events and errands, you can change the format of the text, insert images, and append links to Web pages. In our review of the application, we found that the Linked Column, which lets your mobile phone automatically open Web sites, dial phone numbers, and start an email, saved us time when working with our business contacts.

If you tend to keep a lot of to-do lists, the Find feature is particularly useful because you can search ListPro or one ListPro list for a specific task. We also liked the Packing List feature, which offers more than 13 prearranged inventories, including Carry-On Luggage, Portable Office, and Travel Aids.

MobiMate WorldMate

Prices vary for premium & standard services • www.mobimate.com



How many times could you have used real-time flight information on your mobile phone while traveling? With a subscription to the premium service, WorldMate can reference more than 350 world airlines for flight delays, gate changes, and terminal updates, so you'll be prepared before you get to the terminal. Some WorldMate subscriptions also include up-to-date, global weather satellite imagery, as well as radar and precipitation maps for North America. For additional weather information, WorldMate also offers five-day forecasts for over 400 worldwide locations. The Weather Forecast feature offers handy icons that display the current conditions and wind direction.

As a full-featured travel tool, WorldMate has services for world clocks, a clothing size converter, a currency converter, exchange rate data, a size and measurement converter, and a world day/night map. The Clothing Size Converter tool features handy drop-down menus that let you select men's, women's, or children's clothes, so you don't have to sort through a list of sizes to find the appropriate measurement. In our experience, WorldMate was extremely easy to use, and the flight status updates were swift to load, which is ideal if you need quick access to flight information.

Paragon Software Group Handy Weather

$14.95 • www.penreader.com

Although temperature is a decent indicator of weather conditions, humidity and wind conditions play a large part in what we actually feel when we head outdoors. To provide a more accurate assessment of the weather, Handy Weather gives you a "real feel" temperature based on the current temperature, wind speed, barometric pressure, and humidity. Additionally, the program uses detailed icons to show you a general status of the weather.

Rather than cramming a long list of five-day forecasts for the cities you want to view, Handy Weather provides a large icon with the five-day or current forecast (depending on the chosen view) that fills the entire screen. To see the weather for a different city, you can select the left or right buttons next to the city name. The design makes it easy to gather full forecasts in a short period of time. If you want to save on your data plan, you can configure Handy Weather to update ever 24 hours or only when you tell the application to perform a manual update. Handy Weather is available for Windows Mobile, Palm OS, and Symbian OSes.

PerDiemCo PLT7

Free • www.perdiemco.com

PLT stands for Personal Location & Tracking, and PLT7 lets phones with a GPS receiver display your current location on Google Maps or Virtual Earth Maps; send your real-time location to a friend; track your travel route over a period of time; and create group travel maps with friends. To set up the software, you simply need to choose a PIN, and PLT7 gathers the GPS information from your mobile phone.

After activation, PLT7 stores your movements so you can track where you—or other users whose PINs you know—have been, as well as your current position. Whether you're attending a convention with colleagues or on a group hiking trip, PLT7 is a handy and fun tool. We especially like the Points Of Interest feature, which lets you set locations you want to remember and help other users find.

Pocco Software ProTone Voice Recorder

$25.99 • www.poccosoftware.com

Whether you want to record audio at a business meeting or capture voice messages on your mobile phone, you will want an application that lets you configure, start, stop, and review audio clips with one touch. The ProTone Voice Recorder from Pocco Software lets you assign device buttons for recording and playback functions. The program also displays a list of audio files on your smartphone so you can quickly locate clips for playback.

We particularly like the voice-activated recording system with adjustable voice-activation settings. To test the ProTone Voice Recorder's voice-activated system, we placed our mobile phone about 2 feet away on our desk and spoke to it. The application had no problems detecting the sound of our voice. If you need to save space on your mobile phone, you can set the ProTone Voice Recorder to automatically stop after a period of silence, and there's a silence cut feature that allows the application to automatically remove audio silence from your recordings. For clip editing, you can append, insert, and overwrite clips, which you can record in WAV and variable PCM (pulse code modulation) qualities.

Spb Software House Spb Traveler

$29.95 • www.spbsoftwarehouse.com

Flying from location to location can be disorienting, especially when you're traveling between time zones, shifting weather conditions, and visiting different cultures. Spb Traveler gives you four-day weather forecasts, the local time, and the present currency exchange rates for multiple destinations from the Today screen on your Windows Mobile phone. In addition, you can select a listed city to learn more about the location, including dial codes, links to city guides, local sunrise and sunset times, and city maps.

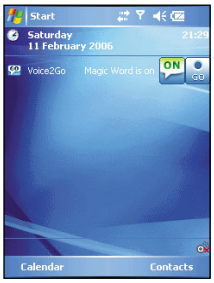
For further travel assistance, Spb Traveler includes a tip calculator and tools for converting currency, clothing sizes, time, measurable units, and more. We really liked the Trip Assistant feature, which lets you manage your flight details, including arrival time, booking reference, and ticket number. We particularly liked how we could configure the City List to display detailed information on a few cities or limited data on as many as 12 cities—depending on our travel needs. With more than 10,000 cities available, Spb Traveler is ideal for travelers looking for a do-it-all travel assistant application.

Vito Technology Voice2Go

$7 • www.vitotechnology.com

Voice control applications can be time-savers when you need to use your smartphone on the go. Some phones come with basic voice-command tools, but if yours doesn't or if you want to command more features on your smartphone, consider Voice2Go from Vito Technology. Voice2Go lets you set up voice controls to open and close applications, bring up and dial contacts, modify system settings, select on-screen buttons, and launch macros. To set up a voice command, you click the Manage Commands icon; select the application, contact, or function you want to open; and press Record.

Voice2Go responded well in our voice tests, and the software even recognized our commands in a noisy grocery store. Because Voice2Go must be running to perform actions, the application includes a Magic Word feature that, when prompted, tells your mobile phone to start Voice2Go. For complex actions, such as to load a specific file, you can configure Voice2Go to record the actions you perform in a macro, and then the macro runs with a voice command you set up in Voice2Go. The Macro Recording feature was particularly helpful for loading commonly accessed Web pages and Office Mobile files, as well as to adjust system settings not available in the Manage Commands list.



WalletWare ExpensePlus

$49.95 • www.walletware.com

When you need to keep track of your expenses, a pile of messy receipts isn't the ideal outcome at the end of a long trip. To help you account for all your travel-related expenses, ExpensePlus from WalletWare lets you categorize spending under all the common expense report categories including Lunch, Mileage, Phone, and Rental. And you can file your expenditures in an overall expense report that you can export into Excel. When you hotsync your mobile phone to your work PC, ExpensePlus automatically opens Excel to display the complete expense report, making it easy to print off or email.

ExpensePlus lets you store multiple expense reports, and there's a drop-down menu at the top of the screen that lets you quickly switch among reports. For each entry you make, there's a small description field and payment type listing (including Checking, Visa, Cash, and American Express) that comes in handy for later reference.

You can use ExpensePlus to back up the report, additional data files, and images to a memory card to ensure you won't lose any of your critical expenditures.

Made To TRAVEL

Notebook & Smartphone Cases That Are Perfect For The Road

Although there are many notebook and gadget cases available, it is only the select few that are truly designed to withstand the abuse of frequent air travel. By selecting the right case, you can ensure that your case is both durable and also convenient to use when you travel. In this article, we'll take a look at three outstanding notebook cases and two gadget cases, all of which are designed especially for travelers.

by Kylee Dickey

Brenthaven Mobile Trek WC Laptop Case

$179.95 • www.brenthaven.com

Brenthaven provides many of the essential features a traveler needs in a notebook case to its Mobile Trek WC Laptop Case. This case includes an ergonomic extension handle, which makes it easy to navigate airport hallways as you find your way to your gate. When you aren't using the extension handle, it retracts so that you can tuck it away inside its own zippered compartment. Both sides of the Mobile Trek WC have small, easily accessible pockets where you can store your airline tickets or even a water bottle. In the front compartment, you'll find several pockets where you can store items such as your smartphone or AC adapters for various devices.

Brenthaven also ensures that your notebook will stay safe even as it faces the perils of frequent travel. The case incorporates Brenthaven's CORE Protection System for notebook protection, which not only pads the two sides of your notebook computer but also protects each of the four corners of your notebook from impact. The Brenthaven Mobile Trek WC Laptop Case accommodates notebooks from 14 inches to 15.4 inches. It also comes with a lifetime warranty.

Everki Release 15.4" Laptop Trolley Briefcase

$129.99 • www.everki.com

If you need a notebook case that holds a lot but in a compact form, the Everki Release 15.4" Laptop Trolley Briefcase is an excellent option. This case doesn't appear any larger than a standard notebook briefcase, but it opens to reveal many enclosures, pockets, and file compartments.

The Everki Release 15.4" Laptop Trolley Briefcase has a padded notebook compartment to keep your computer safe. In addition, it has an extension handle and wheels for carrying your notebook through airports and hotels without difficulty. The briefcase has a central compartment that stores your essential documents and files, and it has a large section in the front for carrying all of your notebook accessories, chargers, and mobile gadgets. There is also a large mesh pocket on the front of the bag where you can store items to which you need to have quick, convenient access. This is an ideal pouch for carrying a small organizer that holds your ID, airline tickets, and any other must-have-handy items.

Kensington Contour Overnight Notebook Roller

$129.99 • www.kensington.com

The Kensington Overnight Notebook Roller is designed specifically for those who want to carry fewer bags, as it can double as both a notebook case and an overnight bag. The five-stage telescoping handle and wheels make it easy to tote the Overnight Notebook Roller through the airport. In fact, the American Chiropractic Association endorses the case's design, which makes it ergonomic and easy to carry. This versatile case includes not only the roller handle common to travel notebook cases but also an interior compartment for clothing and also a water-resistant pocket for toiletries. Finally, the case has easy-to-reach pockets that hold your PDA or smartphone, airline tickets, and more. In all, the case has six external zippered compartments and a mesh bottle compartment.

Besides the travel features above, the case also has many of the best features you'll find in notebook cases. For example, an expandable exterior compartment can hold your files, and Kensington's Snug-Fit system and DropShield technology keep your notebook safe from damage. The Kensington Overnight Notebook Roller accommodates notebook computers up to 17 inches in size.

BoxWave Armor Case

$34.95 • www.boxwave.com

If you need ultimate protection for your BlackBerry Pearl while you travel, the BoxWave Armor Case for BlackBerry 8100 is an exceptional value. This case is constructed of anodized aluminum metal and offers a perfect fit for your BlackBerry. In addition to the custom fit, the BoxWave also provides extra protection with a foam interior lining that holds your smartphone in place.

As you no doubt realize, tossing your BlackBerry into a carry-on bag can endanger its LCD. The Armor Case's Plexiglas window covers your BlackBerry's screen and keeps it safe from many of the scratches and other minor types of damage that often happen on the road.

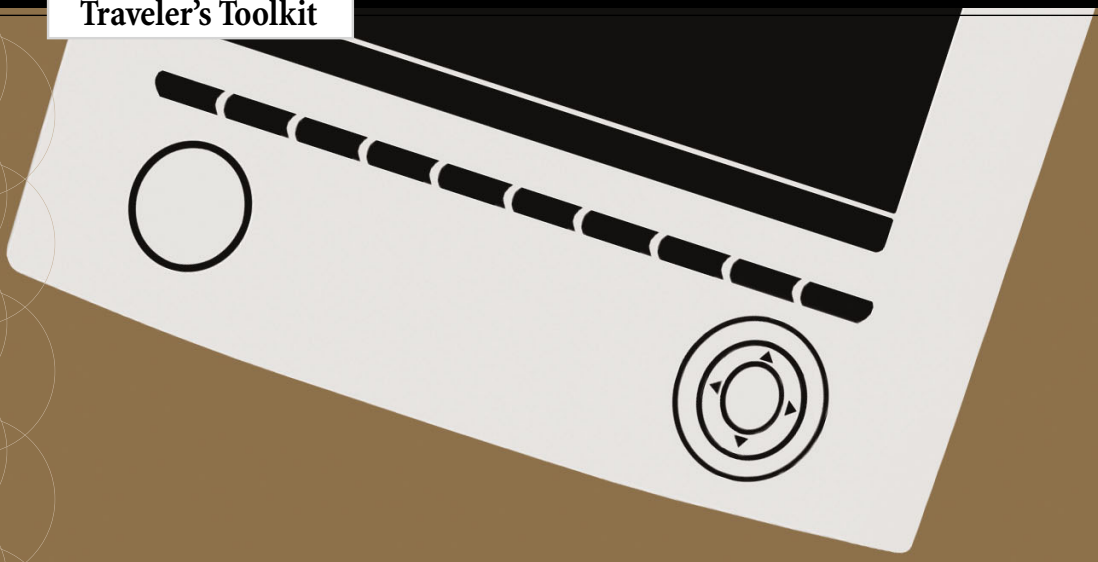
You can use your BlackBerry without removing it from the Armor Case via openings that reveal the buttons and other controls on your phone. You can also access the charging port without removing your BlackBerry from the Armor Case. The case is available in both black and silver.

Otter Products Otterbox 1920 Palm Treo Case

$99.95 • www.otterbox.com

Many PDA and smartphone cases we've covered in the past have been stylish and elegant but not necessarily rugged. The Otter Products Otterbox 1920 Palm Treo Case is an exception. This case is designed specifically to protect your Palm Treo against a variety of mishaps that may happen while you travel. The case provides protection from drops and prevents your Treo from getting crushed if subjected to a heavy impact. The case is also water-resistant, making it an excellent ally when you don't know what weather to expect at your destination.

Although the Otterbox 1920 completely encapsulates your Treo, it does not prevent you from using your smartphone. You can still access all of the buttons and controls to operate the phone. You can also charge or sync your Treo without removing it from the protective case. The Otterbox 1920 Palm Treo Case is compatible with the Palm Treo 650, 700w, and 700p. If you have a different smartphone or other portable device, however, you should check the Otterbox Web site because the company makes many rugged cases for a variety of products.



DIVERSIONS

Fun, Easy & Portable Ways To Pass TheTime

Every day, technological innovations emerge with the potential to make your travels more enlightening and entertaining. In times past, the best you could do to pass the time during a layover or hotel stay was read a book or watch television. These days, however, there are many devices and services that grant you access to a world of entertainment previously unattainable to travelers.

Of course, there's nothing wrong with a good old-fashioned book; now, however, the available reading selection has increased, as has the medium through which you find your reading material. Video content has never been easier to acquire and view; even hard-to-find titles are more readily available now than ever before. Check out some of the innovative products below for ideas to keep you entertained while traveling.

by Seth Colaner

Playaway Audio Books

Prices vary • store.playawaydigital.com

Books on CD are a convenient way to listen to your favorite titles while traveling, but it is cumbersome and tedious to carry around a stack of CDs for just one book. Playaway Audio Books, by contrast, are self-contained. Each book, regardless of length, comes in a cassette-tape-sized box. Turn on the device, plug in the included headphones, and press Play to start listening. There is no need for an additional player.

When you need a break, the automatic bookmark function remembers where you left off, so you can return to the point where you stopped listening without missing a beat. The universal headphone jack lets you plug in your favorite cans or a set of external speakers, so you can enjoy your audio book in a variety of environments. When you're done, you can share the Playaway, just like any other conventional book

To save money and waste, mail back a Playaway book when you're finished with it. Playaway will "refill" it with a new title of your choice and send it back to you, and you'll only pay half price. The categories from which you can choose range from Classics to Sci-Fi to Instructional & Educational.

eReader

Prices vary • www.ereader.com

The only drawback to being an avid reader is that it's difficult to drag stacks of books around with you, especially when you're traveling. With eReader, that particular problem is solved. As long as you have a Palm OS or Pocket PC device (or any Macintosh or Windows computer), you can download as many books as your hard drive can handle and read them electronically at your leisure.

At the eReader Web site, you can set up a free account and browse or search for the book and magazine titles you want in over 103 categories. Pay for your selected titles, download and open the ZIP file, and start reading. You can navigate the pages with either a stylus and the on-screen toolbar or the hardware buttons on your mobile device.

Just like a conventional book, eReader ebooks have pages to turn instead of a long, scrollable document. At any time, you can bookmark a page with a single click and return to it whenever you open up the book again. If you're a margin scribbler, you can also write notes and attach them to a particular page. One pleasant side effect of reading a book on a mobile device's backlit screen: You can always read in the dark.

InMotion Pictures DVD Rentals

Starts at $15 per day for a player and DVD package
www.inmotionpictures.com

From an InMotion Entertainment airport store location, you can rent a DVD package, which includes a DVD (or multiple DVDs) of your choice, a portable 7-inch DVD player, and other necessary accessories, such as headphones. Watch up to four hours of movies on your flight (or unlimited time with the included AC adapter). When you land, either return it to another InMotion Entertainment store or ship it back in the included packaging with the prepaid shipping label.

To ensure that you get a player, reserve one online before your trip. Of course, you can also rent a DVD in-store to watch on your own portable DVD player or laptop. Check out InMotion for audio CD and game rentals, as well.

TotalVid On Demand Videos

$9.95 per month for unlimited downloads • totalvid.zipidee.com

When you sign up for an account with TotalVid, you get unlimited downloads of movies, TV shows, and miscellaneous videos of all kinds. Categories of videos range from Action Sports to Gaming to Parenting.

Browse through all the categories to find something that piques your interest and then follow the download instructions. There are three ways to acquire TotalVid's content. You can sign up for a free one-week trial, after which you'll pay $9.95 per month for unlimited downloads. You can also rent video à la carte; content will be yours to watch within 30 days. After you watch it once, you can view the video an unlimited number of times for the next seven days. A third option is to buy a video outright; you'll receive a download to watch immediately, and TotalVid will also send you a DVD copy in the mail.

Audible.com

$14.95 or $22.95 (monthly); $149.50 or $229.50 (yearly) • www.audible.com

At Audible.com, you can download audio versions of best-selling books, magazines, and newspapers, as well as radio shows and podcasts. After joining the service as a member, all that is left is to download the Audible software and start browsing for audio books to download.

Membership plans range from monthly ($14.95 for Gold or $22.95 for Platinum) to yearly ($149.50 for Gold or $229.50 for Platinum). Each month (or all at once with a yearly plan), you get one point, which is roughly the equivalent of one free audio book or program. With the Platinum plans, you get twice the points. After your one free program per month, prices for individual downloads vary.

You can transfer your Audible.com downloads to virtually any mobile audio device, including MP3 players, GPS devices, cell phones, and PDAs. Or, if you like, just burn a CD of your favorite downloads.

Smart Packing, EASY TRAVELING

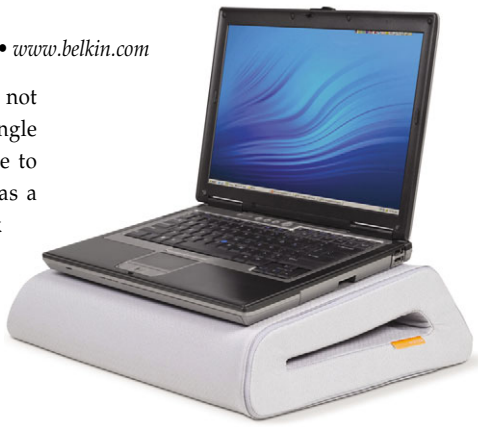
Accessories You Won't Want To Travel Without

You've remembered your toothbrush, shampoo, and an extra change of clothes, but do you really have everything you need for another long business trip? There are some things—like a good accessory to your mobile business gear—you never knew you needed until you have one. Here are some useful items that will help you make the most out of all your business trips and travel gear.

by Tessa Warner Breneman

Belkin CushTop

$34.99 • www.belkin.com

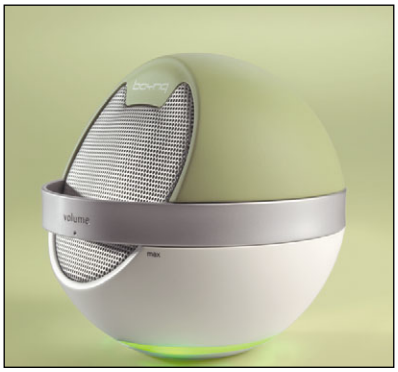


While laptops may be useful and convenient, they aren't necessarily comfortable to use on your lap. Your legs may become hot and sweaty, and your hands aren't in a very comfortable position. To help with the awkwardness of using a laptop on your lap, whether it be on the floor, on the couch, or in bed, Belkin has created the CushTop.

The CushTop provides a comfortable cushion with upholstery-like fabric to sit between you and your hot laptop. This not only protects your lap, but it sits at an angle to make it easier and more comfortable to work on your laptop. The CushTop has a storage pocket in the middle to tuck away power adapter and cords, so they won't be bothersome to you or others. Additionally, each side of the CushTop supports either a large or small laptop.

Boynq Saturn Laptop Speaker

$29.99 • www.boynq.com



The Saturn is a unique, small, sphere-shaped portable laptop speaker from Boynq that is not only stylish, but useful, as well. A plug-and-play device, the Saturn connects to your laptop via USB drive with no batteries or software required. The Saturn has a volume control ring that circles around the outside. It also has an in-line audio connector that you can hook up to audio devices, such as iPods and CD players. The Saturn is magnetically shielded from high-frequency interference from devices such as mobile phones.

The Saturn's power control isn't exactly traditional; its gravity switch consists of a power-on surface and a power-off surface. To turn it on, tilt the Saturn forward. The LED indicator light will illuminate, and the Saturn is ready to use. When you tilt the Saturn backward, it turns off.

The lightweight Saturn has a visually appealing soft rubber finish and comes in black, green, lavender, blue, or red. On the inside, the Saturn has an enhanced 5W RMS full-range driver, which makes for clear and powerful sound.

D-Link DBT-120 Wireless Bluetooth 2.0 Adapter

$49.99 • www.dlink.com

When you need to quickly sync your mobile devices to your notebook or PC, Bluetooth is a quick and easy way to go. The D-Link Wireless Bluetooth 2.0 Adapter (DBT-120) is small, lightweight, and perfect for a frequent traveler who regularly synchronizes documents, calendar appointments, and contact information with a notebook or PC. You can also connect Bluetooth-enabled peripherals such as mice, keyboards, and headphones.

The Wireless Bluetooth 2.0 Adapter is a plug-and-play device that comes with software to help you manage and pair Bluetooth-enabled devices. Your data is protected with 128-bit encryption and FHSS (Frequency-Hopping Spread Spectrum) technology. With support for Windows 2000/XP and Mac OS X, the Wireless Bluetooth 2.0 Adapter is flexible enough to use anywhere.

Casio Exilim Card EX-S10

$249.99 • www.casio.com

The new Casio Exilim Card EX-S10 will be a perfect travel companion, being that it's a mere 0.5 inch thick. The 10.1-megapixel camera creates high-resolution images that are great for enlarging or cropping. And despite the camera's small, compact size, the LCD screen is large (2.7 inches wide), clear, and vivid.

One useful feature of the Exilim Card EX-S10 is the Auto Shutter function, which directs the camera to take a picture at the moment a subject smiles or stops moving. Another excellent feature, Auto Best Shot, automatically adjusts the scene mode, face detection, and exposure settings, so you don't have to be a professional in order to take high-quality shots.

A fun addition to the Exilim Card EX-S10 is the YouTube capture mode, which makes it easy to upload and share videos. The camera also includes H.264 video technology, so video footage is of sufficient quality for playback on a widescreen TV. Additionally, you can drag and drop media from the Exilim Card EX-S10 directly to iTunes, making it a breeze to transfer pictures and video to your iPod.

Garmin Mobile 10 for Laptops

$149.99 • www.garmin.com

Finding your way around in an unfamiliar city is sometimes difficult, which is especially inconvenient when you're trying to attend an important meeting. The Garmin Mobile 10 for Laptops offers navigation software to give your Bluetooth-enabled laptop GPS capabilities. Garmin Mobile XT, nRoute navigation software, and City Navigator NT street maps are all included. Points of interest such as restaurants, hotels, and gas stations are also incorporated.

The Bluetooth technology eliminates the need for cords, so all you have to carry is a clip-on receiver the size of a pack of gum and your notebook. You won't have to worry about fumbling around with your laptop as you try to decipher directions because the Mobile 10 has turn-by-turn voice-prompted guidance. If you do happen to miss a turn or an exit, the Mobile 10 will recognize it automatically and give you directions to get you back on track.

Iogear Gear Juice Mobile Pocket Power

$49.95 • www.iogear.com

When you are on the road, hastily jetting from airports to boardrooms, it is sometimes hard to stop and find the right time and place to recharge your mobile devices. With Iogear's Gear Juice Mobile Pocket Power, you don't have to stay tethered to a power outlet while you work.

The small, lightweight battery pack includes seven different connector tips, so you can recharge devices such as mobile phones, PDAs, MP3 players, and Bluetooth headsets. The Mobile Power Pack also has a power adapter, a Euro charger, and a capacity meter that displays with a push of a button. A USB output is used for USB-powered devices, and it has a USB cable that connects to the other connector tips. The Mobile Pocket Power supports Sony Ericsson, Samsung, iPhone, and Nokia devices, along with devices such as digital cameras and portable gaming devices. Additionally, the Mobile Pocket Power has a travel bag for easy storage of all seven connector tips, both power adapters, and the battery pack.

Kensington ComboSaver Combination Portable Notebook Lock

$24.99; www.security.kensington.com

Keeping your notebook safe when you're not in the comfort of your home or office isn't always easy, and it's hard not to worry when you have personal and sensitive information stored on it. But you can rest assured that it is safe with the Kensington ComboSaver Combination Portable Notebook Lock.

The ComboSaver uses a keyless four-wheel combination lock that offers 10,000 different personalized combination codes. The T-bar locks into place in the Kensington Security lock slot, which is found on most notebooks. Then the 6-foot aircraft-grade steel cable with a 4.5mm diameter secures your notebook to immovable objects. The combination is easy to reset, and if you're worried about forgetting the combination, you can register it online so it's accessible from any Internet connection. Additionally, the ComboSaver comes with a rubber cable tie for easy storage.

Logitech Premium 4-Port USB Hub For Notebooks

$29.99 • www.logitech.com

Sometimes you need more USB ports than your notebook has to offer. With the Logitech Premium 4-Port USB Hub For Notebooks, you'll be able to connect all of your peripherals, resulting in more efficient production outside the office.

About the size of a pack of gum, the USB Hub is extremely portable and only requires a short USB cable to connect with your notebook. It's a true plug-and-play device that works with both Windows and Mac operating systems. The indicator light will activate once it's connected, meaning you're ready to connect devices such as MP3 players, thumb drives, a portable mouse, speakers, or a camera.

Microsoft Bluetooth Notebook Mouse 5000

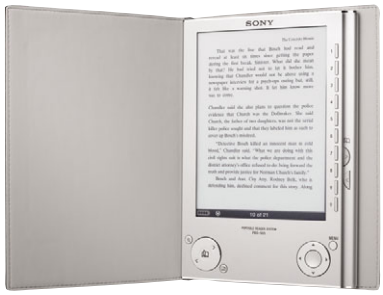
$49.95 • www.microsoft.com

Using a wireless mouse with your notebook not only frees up a USB port but also helps you work faster and more efficiently than your touchpad. The Microsoft Bluetooth Notebook Mouse 5000 works with Bluetooth-enabled notebooks (or a Bluetooth adapter) to provide you with a high-definition laser that is quick to respond and accurate. The Bluetooth Notebook Mouse 5000 is comfortable to use and comes with a scroll wheel to help you save time when navigating through lengthy documents.

The Bluetooth Notebook Mouse 5000 features four buttons for easy navigation. In addition to the traditional two buttons, the back button helps you switch between folders and Web pages, while the scroll wheel also has a button that activates auto-scroll. Additionally, you can control the power of the mouse in order to preserve the battery, and the LED Indicator light will flash red when you're almost out of juice.

Sony Reader Digital Book

$299.99 • www.sonystyle.com



Waiting in airports, staying in hotel rooms, and sitting through long flights can leave you feeling bored and impatient. Passing the time with books, magazines, and newspaper articles can help, but fitting enough of them into your travel or carry-on bag is sometimes a difficult task for lengthy trips. With the Sony Reader Digital Book, you can carry up to 160 ebooks in your carry-on. With the optional removable memory card, you can also carry hundreds of magazine and newspaper articles, or more ebooks.

It weighs just 9 ounces and is only 1/3 inch thick, so it's perfect for the frequent traveler. It also has a battery that supports 7,500 continuous pages, giving you plenty of time to enjoy your reading. You can enlarge the text for sight-impaired readers, and the 6-inch display has high contrast and high resolution. You can download any of the ebooks available at The eBook Store from Sony, and the Reader also supports document formats such as Adobe PDF, RTF, TXT, BBeB, and Microsoft Word.

Targus Travel Power Outlets With Surge Protection

$19.99 • www.targus.com

Sometimes it's hard to work with the limited power outlets provided in hotel rooms. And full-sized power strips are clumsy and difficult to travel with. The Targus Travel Power Outlets With Surge Protection trip provides you with four grounded three-prong power plugs, and it's still compact and light enough to easily travel with. The 8-inch power cord wraps around the body of the power outlet strip and connects to a power plug on the tip of the power strip for quick and easy packing.

The strip guards your devices from power surges and spikes, making it the only travel-sized power strip to do so. The Targus Travel Power Outlet Strip also has over-current protection and a resettable button.

Targus Wireless Presenter With Cursor Control

$49.99 • www.targus.com

Whether you are giving a presentation in your own office or on the road, the Targus Wireless Presenter With Cursor Control is a useful device. You can use it as a traditional mouse with its cursor control, as well as conduct presentations and draw attention to key points with the built-in laser pointer. The long-range wireless technology will work up to 50 feet away, giving you the flexibility to move around the room for a more engaging presentation.

The Wireless Presenter includes plug-and-play technology, so you won't have to install any software, and you can use it with different computers. You just plug in the USB receiver, and you're set to present. Also, it'll easily pack into a carry-on or laptop bag, thanks to its lightweight, compact design.

Multimedia DEVICES

Entertainment For The Road

Whenever you're traveling—killing time between flights, entertaining yourself on the plane, or unwinding in your hotel room—it's always refreshing to listen to some music or watch a DVD. There are many devices that facilitate such multimedia enjoyment; those that are portable enough to stash in your carry-on or fit in the small amount of extra space in your suitcase are ideal. We've rounded up some products that will definitely fit the bill.

by Seth Colaner

Altec Lansing Orbit Speaker

$39.95 • www.altec-lansing.com

Who knew you could get this level of audio quality in a speaker that runs on batteries and can fit in a pants pocket? Yet the fact remains that the Altec Lansing Orbit portable speaker, although tiny, produces relatively clear, distortion-free sound.

The Orbit lays flat with the cone pointing to the sky, which facilitates the 360-degree sound field; if you do want to project the sound in a certain direction, the circular device has notches on its side that let you stand it up on its own.

You can plug your digital audio player or cell phone into the Orbit. Imagine hooking your cell phone up to what amounts to a mega-speakerphone so that you can hear the other side of your conversation while dashing around the hotel room to get changed for a late business meeting. Or perhaps after a long day of travel, you can crash in your hotel room and listen to your favorite playlist without headphones as you fall asleep.

The Orbit is compact and utterly portable, but it is also rugged enough for travel and can run for 24 hours on three AAA batteries (which are included in the package). It's also refreshing that the only cable or cord you have to worry about is a short one that connects the speaker to your cell phone or digital audio player.

BlueAnt M1 Stereo Speakers

$199 • www.myblueant.com

Although one would never guess it from its size, this little speaker bar offers 2.1 channels at 28W RMS. It even includes a built-in subwoofer for extra bass support. At 3.46 x 12.40 x 3.5 inches (HxWxD) and 40.21 ounces, the BlueAnt M1 speakers are small enough to stow in a carry-on or suitcase, but they can provide hours of musical bliss when you reach your destination.

Powered by rechargeable NiMH batteries or an AC adapter, these speakers can crank out tunes for up to 10 hours on a single charge. By far, however, the best feature of the BlueAnt M1 speakers is their Bluetooth compatibility.

That means that you can wirelessly stream music or audio books from your Mac or PC, mobile phone, or other Bluetooth devices. Plug a digital audio player into the 3.5mm jack with the included cable, and you can turn the device into a portable jukebox.

Sony PSP

$169.99 • www.playstation.com

What's a PSP? It's the PlayStation Portable, that handheld gaming device that your kids are always playing. Why would you want one? Because it's way more than a child's toy.

Of course, you can play games on a PSP; Sony has dozens of titles available. But you can also watch movies and TV programs on the device's bright, clear, 4.3-inch widescreen display. All games and movies come on tiny discs that are easily transportable, even by the handful. Once in your hotel room, winding down for the day, you can connect the PSP to any TV with audio/video ports and watch movies or play games on the TV screen.

While the PSP's speakers are plenty loud enough for you to enjoy your media content without headphones, if you want to keep your games and movies to yourself, the device package includes headphones.

The PSP also has 802.11b Wi-Fi, so you can browse the Internet or check your email with the device at surprisingly brisk speeds.

Panasonic LS86 Portable DVD Player

$199.95 • www.panasonic.com

Nothing beats popping in a DVD for a long plane ride, layover in an airport, or quiet evening in a hotel. Though the Panasonic LS86 is a portable DVD player, it can also double as a digital music player, complete with CD or MP3 playback. Either way, the 8.5-inch widescreen will be sufficiently large to entertain you for up to 13 hours on a single charge. The built-in stereo audio is produced by DTS and Dolby digital output.

The LS86 can play back a variety of formats, including DVD, DVD-RAM, DVD-R/RW, CD, and CD-R/RW, and it receives television broadcasts, as well. For long rides, the LS86 also features a car power adapter.

Archos 705 WiFi Portable Media Player

$399 • www.archos.com

At 22 ounces, the Archos 705 WiFi portable media player is a little hefty—but that's because it packs in a whopping 80GB (or 160GB) of space on its hard drive. You'll barely notice the weight, however, when you're watching a movie or looking through photos on the 7-inch touchscreen.

This powerful device is packed with features. It can play or display a variety of media types, including DVD-quality H.264, WMV, and MPEG-4 video; MP3, WMA, and AAC audio; and JPEG, BMP, and PNG images. You can even view PDF files and make your own audio recordings. You can listen to up to 25 hours of music or watch up to 5.5 hours of video on a single Li-Ion battery charge, as well as watch and listen nonstop with the AC adapter.

Of course, the most powerful feature of this device is Wi-Fi. With just a click or two, you can connect to the Web via a fast 802.11g connection. Between all the multimedia functions, the enormous hard drive, and the Wi-Fi capabilities, don't think of this as a big media player; think of it as a tiny computer.

Less Noise, MORE SOLITUDE

Travel-Friendly Earbuds & Headphones

Shush. Hear that? It's your ears begging you to ditch the low-cost, underperforming earbuds your MP3 player shipped with and upgrade to a set that puts a premium on sound instead of shaving pennies. And your choices for mobile-friendly models are plenty, as are the features you'll find, including audio quality that tickled our ears with delight, noise-canceling and sound-isolating technologies, designs catered toward comfort, in-line volume controllers, and more. Here's what we found about the five models we plugged in and set about town with.

by Blaine Flamig

JVC HA-NCX77

$79.95 • www.jvc.com

The HA-NCX77 is unique in that its offers built-in noise-canceling technology—a rarity among earbuds. Most use sound-isolating methods, which rely on getting a tight seal between the earbud and ear canal. Noise-canceling models use batteries to power built-in electronics that create anti-noise to counteract the ambient noise around you. JVC says the HA-NCX77 cancels up to 80% of surrounding noise, but this requires using a largish external unit that holds the AAA battery needed.

Positively, the unit can control volume, power, and the noise-canceling monitor. Negatively, it's cell phone-sized (although just 1.9 ounces) and is another device to carry. The 4.9-foot cord and earbuds are also permanently fixed to the unit, but you get a handsome carrying case that also holds an extension cord, airplane adapter, and extra cushions.

The HA-NCX77's best asset is the exceptional audio that its 8.5mm neodymium drivers outputs at this price. Although low sounds don't resound as richly and fully as earbuds with multiple, dedicated speakers, the HA-NCX77's spread out nicely without sounding muddy, and midranges and highs punch brightly without sounding thin. Add in a convenient earbud design with noise-canceling tech and the HA-NCX77 is a fine, affordable choice.

Klipsch Custom-2

$199 • www.klipsch.com

If you've been in a room with a Klipsch speaker system pumping out sound, you understand the company's "Do Right By Your Music" slogan. Klipsch boasts 60-plus years of experience and makes outstanding gear. The Custom-2s are no exception. They pack full-range KG534 dual-balanced drivers, a 50-inch black cloth cord with protective Wireguard, and Flex Wire ear fittings that contour perfectly.

Klipsch says its anatomically designed, patent-pending ear gels "allow for even the most difficult fit." They're among the most comfortable we've used, and you get 10 replacements in three sizes. The earbuds use a right-angle design, weigh 0.458 ounces, and are attractively black and gunmetal gray. They're comfortable over long hauls and handle excellently. Audio-wise, lows and highs fill out nicely. Bass is authentic and deep, and trebles are clean and precise.

The Custom-2 is just a short step down from the $400-plus models discussed here. Factor in the included carrying case and adapters, and $199 isn't unreasonable at all.

Shure SE530

$449.99 • www.shure.com

No, you're not seeing things. The SE530 really is $449.99. Given that each earbud uses a Triple TruAcoustic MicroSpeaker design (one tweeter, two woofers) for "full-bodied bass," $449.99 seems less daunting. Throw in Shure's audio pedigree dating back to 1925 and that the SE530s are possibly the best-sounding consumer buds available, and the price looks better all the time.

Shure goes a long way toward giving you every penny's worth by shipping the metallic-green SE530s in a gorgeous tin box with extra cushions, airplane and stereo jacks, 3-foot and 9-inch extension cords, cleaning tool, hard-shelled case, detachable volume controller, and illustrated instructions to get up to 90% sound-isolating results.

The SE530's multiple speakers leave the buds largish, but they're light (1 ounce) and sound remarkable. Snares and tom toms pop and crack individually. Acoustic guitars resonate lushly. Basses echo realistically. Mix in great sound-isolating results that keep volume levels lower without losing detail, and you're getting a top-price product for your top-price dollars.

Ultimate Ears triple.fi 10 Pro

$399.99 • www.ultimateears.com

As legend has it, Ultimate Ears co-founder Jerry Harvey was once Van Halen's sound engineer. Today, he helps make "earphones for touring musicians, audiophiles, emerging artists, and music fans." If you covet exceptional audio, the triple.fi 10 Pro is for you—even at $399.99.

For your money, UE says you receive "the sonic equivalent of sitting in the world's best recording studios." We can't confirm that, but we'll unequivocally state the buds filled our ears with audio details that we didn't know previously existed in familiar songs. Clarity and crispness of percussions and basses were stunning, as was the accuracy and clarity of horns, keyboards, strings, etc. Three precision-balanced drivers output that audio, with a passive crossover circuit directing lows, midranges, and highs to a speaker dedicated to bass, vocal, or treble.

The 10 Pros are large but still look ultra-hip, and flexible wires near the earbuds keep them in place while afoot. The gel ear cushions (single- and double-flange styles included) are a bit stiff but comfortable. Airplane and stereo adapters, a 26-inch extension cord, a sound-level attenuator, and a cleaning tool are included.

Yamaha RH10MS

$159 • www.yamaha.com

The RH10MS's over-the-ear design is much larger than earbuds, but over-the-ear models arguably are more comfortable for long periods of wear and cancel ambient noise better. Although the RH10MS forego noise-canceling technology, ample foam cushioning around the ears (and head band) effectively keeps most background noise out.

Due to their size, the RH10MS are best suited for after you take your airplane seat or during long layovers. The ear cups rotate about 180 degrees and pivot horizontally, so obtaining a good fit isn't a problem. The thick, 3-foot cord is plenty long and should take a beating. Additionally, a stereo adapter easily screws on and off the cord's 3.5mm jack. An airplane jack is missing, but a soft-cloth velour pouch provides storage space.

Audio comes via 40mm neodymium Mylar drivers and Yamaha's S-Logic 3D Surround Sound for "a spacious-sounding sensation." Considering Yamaha's audio track record, it's not surprising the RH10MS output more-than-respectable audio. Volume levels were a bit limited, but instruments resonated with personality. If you want to tune the world out with comfort, the black-and-white RH10MS should do the trick.

Enhancements For BlackBerry

Apps, Services & Accessories That You Don't Want To Miss

Avid BlackBerry users know how enabling their diminutive devices can be. But after getting familiar with the ins and outs of your BlackBerry, you've probably discovered a thing or two that the device doesn't do or doesn't do as well as you'd like it to. Read on for some of the best third-party applications, Web-based services, and accessories to fill in the gaps and make your BlackBerry even better.

Skylab Mobilesystems MobileTracker for BlackBerry ($24; www.skylab-mobilesystems.com)

If you travel or commute between two locations regularly, then you're undoubtedly looking for a faster way to make the trip. Skylab Mobilesystems' MobileTracker for BlackBerry uses your device's GPS radio to generate statistics and a tracklog as you travel between the departure and destination points. The application even saves the tracklog data in formats that are viewable in Google Earth and Google Maps. The latest version, 1.4, now supports the BlackBerry camera for attaching photos to your tracklogs. Other features include elevation and time tracking and reports on the total time traveled, total distance traveled, and total average speed. The application requires an installed microSD card and is supported on BlackBerry 8130, 8310, 8800, 8820, and 8830 with activated internal GPS, and BlackBerry 8100, 8120, 8300, and 8320 with external Bluetooth GPS receiver.

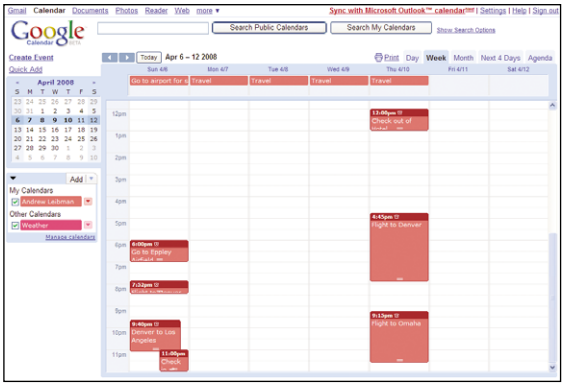
Google Sync (free; www.google.com/mobile/sync)

Your BlackBerry isn't meant to replace your desktop or notebook—just to fill in when you're on the road or away from your desk. But whether you're keeping connected with your BlackBerry during a layover or logged in at your office PC, you still need to keep track of your appointments. Google Sync is a mobile application that lets you synchronize your BlackBerry's native calendar with Google Calendar, a Web-based calendar application that features many of the same capabilities you'll find in Microsoft Outlook. Google Calendar can even import calendar events from Outlook and Yahoo! Calendar. Google Sync lets you stay up-to-date whether you make changes from your main PC or your mobile device. The application also lets you configure your BlackBerry to notify you of impending tasks with audio or vibration alerts.

To get started, you'll either need to log in to your existing Google account or sign up if you don't already have one. To create an account, visit www.google.com/accounts/NewAccount and fill out the required fields. Once logged in, visit www.google.com/mobile/sync and click the Get Started Now icon. Type your mobile number into the text box and click the Send Now icon to get a text message and a link. You can also access the link by launching your mobile browser and navigating to mobile.google.com. Once you're at Google's Mobile site, scroll down and select Sync, Download, and then OK when the Application Was Successfully Downloaded pop-up appears. From the main menu, select Applications and Sync, sign in to your Google account, and then click Sync Now. Now you can update your BlackBerry calendar from Google Calendar or from the device.

Facebook For Blackberry (free; www.facebook.com)

Whether you've been bitten by the social networking bug or not, Facebook For BlackBerry is an excellent way to



Google Sync makes sure you won't miss an important event on the road or in the office.

stay in contact with colleagues, clients, friends, and family. This simple application lets you log in and access full-text wall posts, messages, and pokes, as well as new photo tags, friend requests, and all of your Facebook contacts. You can also use the application to send notes and friend requests right from your BlackBerry. Facebook For BlackBerry requires at least 170KB of available memory on your device and BlackBerry Device Software Version 4.2 or later.

To get started, you can create a Facebook account by visiting www.facebook.com and filling out the appropriate text fields, making sure your email address associated with Facebook is the same address you use for your BlackBerry. Also, make sure to log in to your Facebook account and enable Notifications by clicking the Account link and then Notifications before proceeding.

Click Mobile and enter your BlackBerry phone number, select your carrier, and then click Activate. This will send a text message with a confirmation code to your BlackBerry. Input the confirmation code on the following screen and then click Confirm to send a confirmation text message to the phone. Next, direct your mobile Web browser to www.blackberry.com/emea/facebook_download, select I Accept on the Terms & Conditions screen, click Next, and then click the Download button. Once installed, you'll never be far from your Facebook account again.

Yahoo! Go (free; mobile.yahoo.com)

Your BlackBerry is great for getting news, weather, and emails wherever you go. But instead of relying on bookmarks to get to your frequently visited Web content, consider Yahoo! Go to get everything you need in one place, fast. Yahoo! Go is an Internet portal for your phone that uses a customizable list of widgets to organize emails, news, Flickr photos, Web search, weather, maps, and more. As we went to press, Yahoo! Go 3.0 Beta was available for our BlackBerry 8820.

To install the latest version compatible with your BlackBerry, navigate to m.yahoo.com with your mobile browser, select the download link, click the Download icon, and then select OK. Open your Applications folder and select Yahoo! Go to launch the Web service.

Tekkeon TekCharge MP1550 ($24.95; www.tekkeon.com)

Your BlackBerry is great for helping you get a little extra work done on the road. That is, if the battery is charged. If not, then it becomes just a bulge in your pocket adding wind resistance. To make sure you're never slowed by a dead BlackBerry, get the Tekkeon TekCharge MP1550, a portable device and battery charger.

The Tekkeon TekCharge gives your BlackBerry a power infusion when you need it most.

The TekCharge holds four AA batteries and comes with six adapters and a USB cable to support your BlackBerry, iPhone, iPod, LG, Motorola, Nokia, Samsung, and Sony Ericsson phones. When connected to a USB power adapter, such as the Tekkeon MP1600 (sold separately), the Tek-Charge recharges depleted rechargeable batteries. The TekCharge may not fully recharge your BlackBerry, but it can give you enough juice to send and receive a few vital emails, make several important calls, or quickly find something you need on the Web.

by Andrew Leibman

NEWS*BRIEF*

The Next VZ Navigator Will Help You Avoid Traffic Snags

Verizon Wireless and Networks In Motion have teamed up to add a significant enhancement to Verizon's VZ Navigator. In the upcoming version 4 of this LBS (location-based service), a traffic-monitoring feature will keep users in 75 cities informed about traffic conditions and help them find detours around accidents and general congestion. Other offerings include 3D views, weather forecasts, and information about local gas prices. by Calvin Clinchard

NEWS*BRIEF*

Take Those Google Docs Offline

We haven't seen any first-hand evidence of it as of press time, but Reuters reports that Google is taking steps to make its online word processing, spreadsheet, and presentation services available for offline editing, as well. This would let users create and modify documents even if an Internet connection is unavailable (say, on a plane) and then synchronize the documents with Google's servers as soon as a Web connection is reestablished. This feature will use the existing Google Gears service, which already works for offline viewing of Google Reader news feeds and Remember The Milk (www.rememberthemilk.com) lists. by Calvin Clinchard

Windows Mobile Add-Ons

Do More With Your Smartphone

After switching from a regular cell phone to your new Windows Mobile smartphone, you wonder how you ever survived without this trusty device. It may seem crazy, but you've even fallen in love with your phone, so much so that you have shared your whole life with it. OK, so that may be a bit dramatic, but still, this device has become an important part of your life. After all, it contains your address book, emails, calendar, to-do lists, countless notes and memos, and various personal and work documents and photos.

In addition to these organizational uses, your smartphone can do much more with the help of various applications, accessories, and services. Here's a look at a few options. Although they only scratch the surface as to what you can do with your phone, these add-ons demonstrate some of the many possibilities that are available.

Opera Mini 4 (free; mini.opera.com)

Your smartphone comes with a Web browser installed, likely a mobile version of Internet Explorer. However, Internet Explorer is quite limited in its capabilities, as anyone who's tried to visit a "regular" Web site (that is, a Web site that doesn't offer Web pages that are optimized for mobile browsers) can easily see. With the Opera Mini 4 Web browser, however, you'll see full Web pages, similarly to how you would view them on your PC. In fact, Opera Mini displays an overview of the entire page; you can drag and scroll to navigate around the page or zoom in to a selected area.

For easy page viewing on a small screen, Opera Mini 4 changes the text size on a page to fit the width of the phone's screen, thereby eliminating horizontal scrolling. Perhaps the best feature of all, however, is Opera Mini 4's ability to load pages more quickly than other browsers. It does this by compressing the data before sending it to your phone. As a result, your phone downloads less data, pages load more quickly, and users on an *à la carte* data plan pay less to view a Web page.

Transitioning to this browser doesn't mean you have to duplicate favorite bookmarks already on your computer: In Opera Mini 4, you'll find support for Opera Link, which lets you synchronize and share your bookmarks with the Opera browser that's installed on your PC.

Garmin Mobile XT ($99.99; www.garmin.com)

Finding your way to a restaurant, business meeting, or hotel in an unfamiliar city can be a challenge without a map or other directions. With a Windows Mobile smartphone and GPS (global positioning system), however, you can easily navigate to any destination or search for nearby restaurants or entertainment. Using Garmin Mobile XT, for example, you can search for a nearby Thai restaurant. Once you select an individual restaurant, Mobile XT will give you turn-by-turn voice instructions to help you get there. In addition, Garmin Mobile XT provides access to Garmin Online services for traffic and weather information, along with gas prices and hotel rates.

Nuance Voice Control for Windows Mobile Pocket PC ($5.99 per month; www.nuance.com)

Even if your hands are busy, you can still control your smartphone by voice, thanks to Nuance Voice Control for Windows Mobile Pocket PC. With this handy software, you can make phone calls, create appointments, dictate short emails, or browse the Internet using simple voice commands instead of a keyboard or stylus. For example, instead

Opera Mini 4 provides faster page loads and more features than other browsers such as Internet Explorer.

Navigate unfamiliar streets, search for nearby businesses, or view gas prices with Garmin Mobile XT.

of tapping out an email message to a colleague, you could say, "Send email to Sally Myers. Subject: today's sales call. Body: I'm going to be late. Please start without me." This application doesn't require training, so you can start using it right away.

Handmark Pocket Express Elite ($9.99 per month or $99.99 per year; www.handmark.com)

If you've ever wanted your own personal assistant that could help with everything from making restaurant recommendations to coordinating ground transportation but aren't willing to pay someone a full-time salary to do so, then look to Pocket Express Elite with 24/7 access to MobileCierge. With a simple click, you can speak to a live representative who can provide helpful information regarding personal, travel, emergency, or medical needs. For example, these representatives can help you locate hard-to-find products and services, recommend restaurants and make reservations, help you contact friends and family in the case of an emergency, help you replace your contact lenses, resolve travel issues and rebook flights or hotels, and more.

In addition to a personal assistant, Handmark Pocket Express Elite includes news services, customized portfolio management, maps and routing, airline flight status updates, sports scores, and more. You can also view weather forecasts and look up any published residential or business phone number without having to pay for directory assistance. If you have some downtime while traveling and want to take in a movie, you can even purchase tickets using Pocket Express.

Limitless Possibilities

We can't cover all of the handy mobile applications that are available in this article, but you can turn to "Software For Your Smartphone" on page 32 for more information about a handful of applications that will provide even more functionality for your smartphone. Also, one of the most popular accessories for a mobile phone is a Bluetooth headset. Turn to the "Wireless Headsets & Headphones" on page 56 for more information about headsets that will give you the freedom to talk and multitask.

by Jennifer Johnson

You're only a phone call away from a personal assistant that can answer your questions, thanks to Handmark Pocket Express Elite and MobileCierge.

NEWS*BRIEF*

Jet.Combo Seeks To Bring "Luxury To All"

JetCombo claims that 70% of U.S. air travel involves just 30 airports. That's key to the new company's service, which seeks to harness the availability of thousands of "underused" U.S. airports to offer passengers a combination of commercial and private flights. Travelers can search for flights at www.jetcombo.com as they would any online travel service. The results, though, combine multiple flights on jets large and small to offer the best point-to-point route available. by Calvin Clinchard

NEWS*BRIEF*

New Australian Airline To Accommodate In-Flight Wireless

Passengers flying on V Australia's new Boeing 777-300ER aircraft might soon be able to use GPRS (General Packet Radio Service) mobile phones and data-capable PDAs during flights the same way they use them on the ground during trans-Pacific flights. The only obstacle in the way at present is approval by Australian and U.S. government and regulatory agencies. Panasonic Avionics is providing the technology behind this AeroMobile service, which will let passengers send email, SMS, and other data communications. by Calvin Clinchard

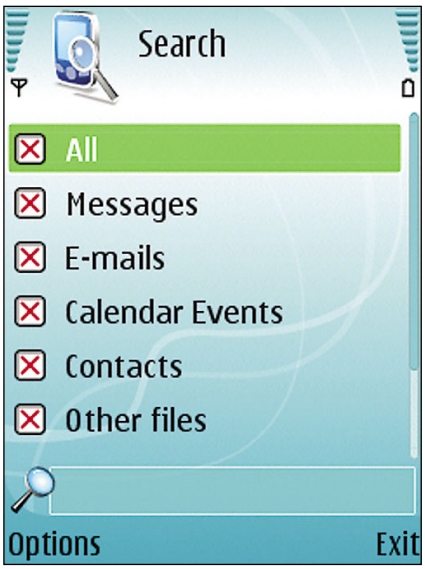
Enhancements For Nokia Smartphones

The Best Add-Ons & Accessories For Your Smartphone

As a Nokia user, you've probably become quite familiar with your phone's functions and capabilities. Despite its well-rounded feature set, however, you've no doubt found yourself looking for ways to make your phone work even better. Here, we've gathered a handful of Nokia-appropriate applications, Web-based services, and accessories that are sure to boost the brain power of your smartphone.

Advanced Call Manager

Just because you're not available to answer your phone doesn't mean your incoming calls should be left to the mercy of your generic voicemail message. WebGate's Advanced Call Manager ($19.99; www.webgate.bg) lets you regain control of your incoming calls by enabling you to set your phone to answer calls with a busy tone, reply with a personalized SMS (Short Message Service), mute the ringer, divert calls to a different phone number, or answer with a custom greeting. You can also organize your phonebook into custom lists and designate a different action for each group.



Nokia Search lets you select the types of content you want to search.

Nokia S60 3rd Edition and 2nd Edition users can download Advanced Call Manager by visiting www.webgate.bg/products/acm, clicking the Download link in the column on the right side of the page, and then clicking the corresponding Download link for their phone model. The free Advanced Call Manager trial version will handle 30 incoming calls before deactivating and prompting you for a license key.

Bluetrek ST1

We all know that Bluetooth works great with hands-free clip headsets, but if your Nokia is a newer model, then chances are it supports the Bluetooth A2DP (Advanced Audio Distribution Profile) capability, which lets you take calls and listen to music in high-fidelity stereo. Bluetrek's ST1 stereo headset ($99.99; www.bluetrek.com) is compatible with Bluetooth specification 1.2-capable phones and is a stylish alternative to clip-style headsets. The Bluetrek ST1 supports A2DP, 3D surround sound, and equalizer effects including Pop, Rock, Truebass, Jazz, Classic, and Basic, so you can make sure your music sounds its best.

The headset also supports the AVRCP (Audio/Video Remote Control Profile), which lets you play, pause, and change songs using the headset's dedicated buttons. The earbud-style headset offers 10 hours of music streaming, 21 hours of talk time, and 11 days of standby battery life.

CellKeeper

Your Nokia is probably one of the more useful (and pricey) gadgets you keep on your person, so it makes sense to want to keep it safe from the perils of your pocket. CellKeeper has the perfect case and wallet combo that makes carrying your prized portable, keys, credit cards, and ID fashionably simple. The CellKeeper Original ($29.99; www.cellkeeper.com) fits our Nokia E61i like a glove with its elastic sides and buttoned strap. The Original comes in a variety of colors and materials (including faux gator) and includes an adjustable strap for wearing your Nokia over your shoulder or on your waist. The company also offers the CellKeeper Professional and the CellKeeper Sport designed for larger and smaller smartphones or devices, respectively.

Nokia MOSH

Nokia's MOSH (free; mosh.nokia.com) isn't just a social network for your phone. MOSH also lets users browse and download multimedia content, such as games, songs, themes, ringtones,

The CellKeeper Original makes our smartphone look sharp.

wallpaper, and applications. And because the content is all user-generated, it's free to download and use. At press time, there were more than 11,000 wallpapers, hundreds of applications, and more than 2,900 ringtones ripe for the plucking. There's almost too much content on MOSH. Thankfully, you can create your own Collections to manage your downloads, uploads, and other site interactions. The site's built-in rating system lets you leave comments and quickly find the best content: Just sort by Most Loved. If you're looking for content that's not readily available on the site, you can post a Seek and wait for someone to upload the content or clue you in to where you can go to find it.

To start downloading, uploading, and commenting, you need to create a MOSH account. Use your PC to browse to mosh.nokia.com, enter a username in the My MOSH text field near the top of the home page, and then click the Go button indicated by the arrow. Enter your information on the resulting page to complete registration and click the hyperlink in the email confirmation to verify your address. When you visit the MOSH Web site, click the Browse Mobile Content link at the top of the page to see the Most Recent, Most Loved, and Most Downloaded content available. You can also find what you need by entering keywords into the Search field in the upper-left corner.

To access MOSH from your Nokia, type mosh.nokia.mobi/start into your mobile browser and see if your phone supports the MOSH client for Nokia devices. With it, you can use your phone to upload, browse, search, and perform other site functions from anywhere.

Nokia Search

Nokia Search (free; www.nokia.com/mobile search) is the all-in-one, find-it-when-you-need-it utility that no mobile user should be without. The application takes advantage of Yahoo!, Windows Live, Google (at press time, Google Search was not available in all versions), and other search engines to deliver directory services and advanced mapping capabilities, weather forecasts for wherever you happen to be, and other Web content such as images or MP3 downloads. Nokia Search also knows its way around your phone: The app lets you search messages, contacts, music, and other files stored on your smartphone.

The Bluetrek ST1 stereo headset lets you hear what you've been missing with your Nokia.

To download and install Nokia Search, use your PC's browser to navigate to www.nokia.com/mobilesearch and click the Download tab at the top of the page. On the following page, select your language from the drop-down menu, scroll to your phone model, and then click the Download button. Once configured, the main Nokia Search menu appears. Scroll right or left to choose your Web search engine of choice, select Yahoo! Image search to find free wallpapers, and scroll down and select My Content to search your phone's memory. by Andrew Leibman

NEWS*BRIEF*

Sprint Prepared To Bank On Instinct

Wireless carrier Sprint, troubled in recent months by an ongoing loss of subscribers, hopes to rebuild some of its base when it releases a touchscreen smartphone in June that's comparable to Apple's iPhone. The Samsung-made Instinct doesn't yet have a price tag, but Sprint indicates that it will sell for significantly less than the iPhone. The Instinct, unveiled at April's CTIA Wireless show in Las Vegas, runs Windows Mobile and offers EVDO Rev. A and Wi-Fi connectivity. by Calvin Clinchard

NEWS*BRIEF*

Sony Movies Coming Soon To AT&T

Full-length theatrical releases on your cell phone screen? Don't knock it until you've been stuck at an airport for hours after the clubs have closed. Although mobile television hasn't caught on in the U.S. as well (or as quickly) as carriers expected, it is gaining some traction. Sony Pictures Television and AT&T hope to build on that traction with the May launch of a new mobile TV service for AT&T Wireless customers. In addition to the standard fare already offered through similar services, AT&T's new service (using Qualcomm's MediaFLO) will feature Sony's mobile movie network, the first of its kind in the U.S. by Calvin Clinchard

New & Updated Mobile Software

Enhance Your Mobile Device With Helpful Software

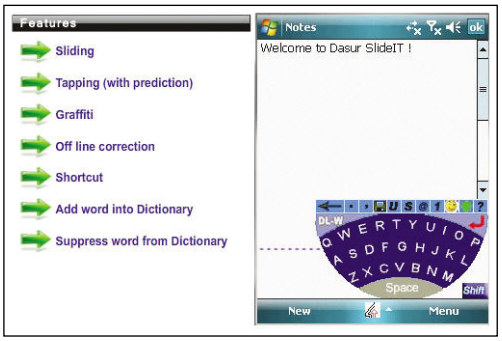
Looking to improve the functionality of your mobile device? We've compiled the most recently released applications and program updates for smartphones and PDAs to help on-the-go users maximize the potential of their mobile devices.

MSN Direct brings current news and data to the Today screen of your Windows Mobile phone.

New Titles For Windows Mobile

If you have a Windows Mobile phone with a touchscreen, check out the **SlideIt** ($40; www.dasur.co.il) and **ThumbKey** ($25) virtual keyboard applications from Dasur. Designed for stylus users, SlideIt lets you point to the first letter of a word and slide the stylus to the next letter. You can insert a space simply by lifting up the stylus. ThumbKey is intended for typists who use one hand because the application suggests the intended word and additional possibilities in a list next to the on-screen keyboard.

GoodWin 2.0 ($19.95; www.vitotechnology.com) from Vito Technology is a finger-friendly application launcher and task manager. Version 2.0 includes a Today plug-in for quick access to GoodWin; a task icon that shows the number of current tasks; and the ability to switch between favorites, installed programs, and settings through the finger scroll interface.



With Dasur's SlideIt, you can slide your stylus to the letters you want to enter to improve you text entry speed.

Would you like to replace the Today screen on your Windows Mobile phone with something a little more user-friendly? **Spb Mobile Shell** ($29.95; www.spbsoftwarehouse.com) changes the Windows Mobile interface to a screen with large-button program launchers that brings up a list of action command pop-ups. You can customize the applications listed on the interface, and Spb Software House indicates version 2.0 includes more customizable, animated, and graphic tools than Mobile Shell 1.5.

Although there are a number of methods to check for the latest news, weather conditions, and stock reports, **MSN Direct** (free; phone.msndirect.com) from Microsoft is unique because the application sends the news straight to your Today screen. Additionally, you can set MSN Direct to update automatically, so your Windows Mobile phone can provide the most current news and information.

SoftMaker announced a public beta of **SoftMaker Office 2008 For Pocket PCs** (free; www.softmaker.com), an office suite that offers feature-for-feature compatibility with Microsoft Office. In particular, it lets you edit Word, Excel, and PowerPoint files without conversion—while retaining the formatting, functions, and contents of the Office files. The SoftMaker Office 2008 suite includes the TextMaker 2008, PlanMaker 2008, and Presentations 2008 applications.

New Title For iPhone

If you want to use your iPhone as a business tool, it's likely that you'll need a way for your phone to synchronize the iPhone email client with Microsoft Outlook. HyperOffice released a public beta of its **HyperOffice Suite** (free; www.hyperoffice.com) to connect your iPhone to corporate email, contacts, calendars, tasks, and notes on your desktop PC's Microsoft Outlook client. The software also allows you to access, update, and manage projects and documents that reside on your company's Exchange server.

New Titles For Multiple Platforms

Opera announced version 9.5 of its **Opera Mobile** (free; www.opera.com) Web browser, which includes a new rendering engine that Opera claims

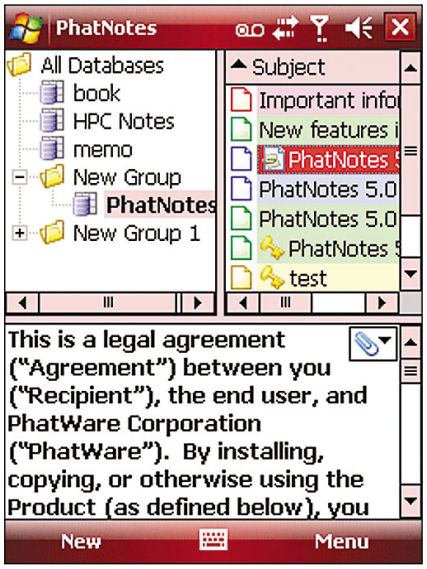
accelerates the loading of Web pages to near desktop speeds. Opera Mobile 9.5 also includes an Opera Zoom feature to help users focus on specific aspects of the page. For greater media support, Opera Mobile comes with Flash and Opera Widgets support to let you easily access video content on the Web.

In other Web browser news, Torch Mobile launched its **Iris Browser** (free; www.torchmobile.com) for Windows Mobile 6. The Iris Browser uses a WebKit rendering engine to provide a full-featured browser experience, including SSL (Secure Socket Layer), antiphishing, and pop-up blocking security features. There's also support for phones with a touchscreen and rotating screen, and you can also customize the Iris Browser's user interface.

Have you ever wanted to create your own mobile game? **Yamake for N-Gage** (free; www.n-gage.com) from Nokia lets you combine a number of mini-games and add your own content to create games on your S60 mobile phone. Once you create your game with Yamake's design tools, Nokia lets you share the games via the N-Gage Arena.

Nokia also released a Beta version of **Nokia Maps 2.0** (free; www.nokia.com). In addition to driving directions, version 2.0 comes with a Walk feature to help pedestrians navigate with turn-by-turn guidance. Nokia Maps 2.0 even provides location references for surrounding buildings, streets, and parks. If your Nokia mobile phone doesn't offer built-in GPS, you can use an external GPS module to receive driving and walking directions.

Owners of S60 Nokia mobile phones with a built-in GPS may also want to check out **Geocache Navigator** (free; www.geocachenavigator.com) from Trimble. Geocache Navigator provides compass-based navigation, maps, speed, hiking, location, distance, cache descriptions, and logs over a radar-like interface. This ad-supported version also allows users to interact with the ads to find the nearest retail location and use mobile coupons.



Version 5.2 of PhatNotes allows you to tap a word, URL, email address, or phone number to bring up a corresponding file, Web site, or contact.

Keep your itinerary in sync with WorldMate Live from MobiMate.

Updated Software

BlackBerry users with **WorldMate Live** ($9.95 per month; www.mobimate.com) installed on their devices will appreciate that the travel tool has been updated to let travel providers keep traveler itineraries in sync with bookings made by agents. The new version also lets travelers change the itinerary on their mobile phone and view the locations of meetings on a map. WorldMate Live now supports more than 100 travel providers.

Boingo Wireless announced that **Boingo Mobile** (unlimited access for $7.95 per month; www.boingo.com) is now available for mobile phones running Windows Mobile 6.0 and UIQ 3.0. The Boingo Mobile Wi-Fi service automatically identifies Boingo-enabled hotspots and authenticates users with a Boingo account.

Interested in reading books on your mobile phone? Fictionwise, an independent book retailer, purchased eReader and has made the **eReader Pro** (free; www.ereader.com) software free of charge for all versions. The Pro version includes custom fonts and color schemes and allows you to look up words from the built-in dictionary.

Vito Technology released **Vito RingtoneEditor** ($9.95) v1.22, and the update provides an easier way for you to set start and finish points for ringtones you create for your Windows Mobile devices. Version 1.22 also provides tools to let you set more precise edit points. RingtoneEditor supports WAV and MP3 file formats, and the ringtones are saved at the same sound quality as the original.

Version 5.2 of **PhatNotes** ($24.95; www.phatware.com) from Phatware includes a context analyzer feature that lets PhatNotes automatically access Web sites, send emails, make phone calls, and open files simply by tapping on words, URLs, email addresses, and phone numbers on your Windows Mobile device. The 5.2 update also includes support for Windows Vista and Windows Mobile 6.1.

If you're looking for an audio streaming tool for your Palm OS mobile phone, consider **Softick Audio Gateway 1.20** ($19.95; www.softick.com) from Softick. The 1.20 update added support for fast forward and fast rewind buttons on headsets, versions of the Kinoma player before 4.2, and the beta version of Sprint TV.

NorthGlide updated its **Uninstall Manager For Palm OS** ($17.95; www.northglide.com), an application to save memory space by completely removing applications, replaced the Installed Files view with a Timeline view. Version 3.20 also lets you delete files in bulk from the Cards view.

by Nathan Lake

Wireless Headsets & Headphones

Enjoy The Freedom

Bluetooth headsets keep us connected while on the go, but they also give us the freedom to use our hands for more important tasks than holding a phone, such as hauling luggage, holding the steering wheel, ironing, taking notes, and so on. There are many Bluetooth headsets on the market today. So many, in fact, that it can be very confusing to find the right headset to meet your needs. After all, each headset has its own strengths and set of features. Here's a look at seven headsets with different features to help you find the one that will best suit your uses.

by Jennifer Johnson

Callpod Dragon

BOTTOM LINE *$129.95 • www.callpod.com*

The Dragon gives you extra flexibility to roam from your phone, giving you a range of as much as 328 feet.

The Dragon headset features a unique design that's slightly larger than some headsets in this roundup. The over-the-ear hook secures the headset on your ear, while the tube-like speaker directs sound into your ear. This directed sound makes it easy to hear the person you're speaking with and helps eliminate some background noise.

When using this headset, you'll want to position the microphone carefully; during my tests, a number of people said they couldn't hear me very well or that I was speaking too softly. I had slightly better results after I repositioned the headset.

One of the Dragon's best features is its ability to reach a maximum range of 328 feet, letting you roam around the office or your home without having to carry your phone. Keep in mind that walls and other objects may decrease this distance, so your results may vary. This headset also incorporates special two-way communication software that makes it possible for two Dragon headset users to talk over a 250,000 square foot area.

Dragon can also connect to your PC for Skype calls, letting you use the headset for both PC and mobile phone calls. As an added convenience, the Dragon has multidevice pairing, so you won't have to set up a new partnership each time you want to switch between your PC and mobile phone.

To compensate for background noise, such as at an airport, noisy restaurant, or in the car, the Dragon incorporates dual-microphone noise suppression. Callpod claims this headset will give you as much as eight hours of talk time and 300 hours of standby time.

CellPoint Flamingo Classic

BOTTOM LINE *$69.99 • cellpoint.com*

If you wear glasses, you'll appreciate the Flamingo Classic's EarClick design that holds this headset in place without a hook or other obstruction.

Headsets come in a variety of shapes, sizes, and colors, as the CellPoint Flamingo Classic demonstrates. This headset hangs down from your ear instead of pointing toward your mouth like many headsets. Even so, sound quality is good; I could hear the people I spoke with, and they said they could hear me fine. In addition to traditional silver and black finishes, the Flamingo Classic comes in your choice of six additional colors.

The Flamingo Classic uses CellPoint's two-prong rubber EarClick design that doesn't require a hook to stay in your ear, and it lets you wear the device comfortably if you wear glasses. In the box, you'll find six EarClick pads to help you find a comfortable and secure fit for your right ear. It took me a few minutes to get this headset to fit in my ear the first time, but after I

did, it held comfortably. When I got the hang of tilting the headset into my ear, future attempts went more smoothly.

Like the Callpod Dragon, you can use the Flamingo Classic for IP telephony calls, such as with Skype. Talk time for the Flamingo is rated at a maximum of eight hours, with a standby time of at least 180 hours.

Iqua 603 SUN

BOTTOM LINE *$99.99 • www.iqua.com*

The Iqua SUN helps the environment while providing excellent battery life and good audio quality.

Whether you're looking for a green headset or you simply want additional talk time beyond what other headsets can provide, the Iqua SUN solar-powered headset may be the headset for which you've been looking. In fact, because this headset can charge itself using any available light source (indoors or outdoors), you can enjoy as much as 12 hours of talk time. Standby time is even longer: Iqua claims infinite standby time if adequate lighting is available. Should you need more power than available light sources can provide, Iqua includes a wall charger with the headset. You'll need to use the wall charger for the initial charge; beyond that, the charger's utility depends on your conditions.

Previously available only in Europe, the Iqua SUN became available in the U.S. early this year. This headset includes support for VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) calls, and you can pair it with as many as eight devices at the same time. In the box, you'll find a flexible ear hook, two rubber ear loops of different sizes, a wall charger, a carrying strap, and a users guide.

To ensure a secure fit, the Iqua SUN's flexible ear hook can adjust to fit any size and shape of ear, left or right. After I bent the loop around my ear, the headset fit very comfortably and held securely. Overall sound quality while talking on this headset was good, and the people I spoke with had no complaints.

Jabra BT3010

BOTTOM LINE *$49.37 • www.jabra.com*

In addition to being stylish and customizable, this headset also has good sound quality.

The Jabra BT3010 is the most individualized headset in this roundup when it comes to looks and style, thanks to its interchangeable cover designs. These cover designs are small, interchangeable pieces of art that sit behind a clear plastic cover on the outside of the headset.

You'll find 33 cover designs in the box. Should you prefer a design that's one of a kind, you can design your own cover at www.jabra.com/coverdesigner. By changing covers, you can express your true personality and match your mood or outfit.

Beyond looks, this headset is functional, as well. In my tests, call quality was very good, and the headset was comfortable. To get the best fit and ensure the headset wasn't going to fall out of my ear, I wore the optional ear hook.

In addition to an ear hook and cover designs, you get an AC power supply and carrying strap with this headset. Jabra claims this headset can support a talk time of up to eight hours and as much as 300 hours of standby time.

Jabra BT8040

BOTTOM LINE *$99.99 • www.jabra.com*

A very comfortable headset with excellent audio quality and a number of audio features that will enhance overall sound quality.

This headset is very comfortable. In fact, it is perhaps the nicest headset I reviewed for this roundup. Part of the reason why the BT8040 is so comfortable is because it is very lightweight and uses what Jabra calls the "Generation III Jabra Ear Gel." This ear gel has a little rubber loop on the earpiece that holds the headset in the folds of your ear without the need for an over-the-ear hook. This is a must for anyone who wears glasses.

Call quality was excellent, perhaps due in part to the BT8040's active noise-reduction technology that enhances the sound quality on both transmitted and received audio. The headset also has Intelligent Volume Settings to equalize the volume of incoming audio. Should the need arise, you can adjust the volume yourself using the Volume Up and Volume Down buttons on the device. To protect your ears from sudden loud noises, the BT8040 incorporates Acoustic Shock Protection.

Because the BT8040 supports the A2DP (Advanced Audio Distribution Profile) Bluetooth profile, you can listen to music from mobile phones, media players, and PCs using this headset. Furthermore, this headset can connect to as many as eight devices, two at the same time, so you won't have to worry about switching connections between devices when listening to music.

In the box, you'll find the headset, six ear gels, an AC charger, and a USB charging cable. Jabra claims this headset has a talk time of six hours and a standby time of 200 hours.

Kensington Bluetooth Stereo Headphones With Microphone

BOTTOM LINE *$79.99 • www.kensington.com*

If you want stereo headphones and a wireless headset but don't want to carry both, the Kensington Bluetooth Stereo Headphones With Microphone is a good option.

The Kensington Bluetooth Stereo Headphones With Microphone is different from any other headset we reviewed because it can function as both stereo headphones and a wireless headset without sacrificing the audio quality of either function.

As you would expect from a headset that also serves dual purpose as headphones, the Kensington Bluetooth Stereo Headphones With Microphone supports A2DP for Bluetooth stereo audio streaming from a phone, computer, or other Bluetooth-capable device.

On the sides of the earpieces, you'll find numerous controls, including Play, Pause, Skip, and Forward Track. The headphones also have a button that lets you answer or end calls and a volume control button.

The microphone on this device protrudes about a half-inch from the left earpiece. You wear these headphones over the ear with the connector between the earpieces falling on the base of your neck. Overall, the headset is comfortable to wear. Call quality was good in my experience, although it was a bit strange to hear conversations in stereo at first since I'm accustomed to single-ear headsets.

This headset supports a range of up to 66 feet from the device. Kensington claims you can listen to up to 23 hours of nonstop music or talk for 19 hours using the built-in rechargeable battery.

Sennheiser VMX100 3-in-1

BOTTOM LINE *$189.95 • www.sennheiser.com*

This headset isn't the smallest headset on the market, but it's still very comfortable to wear, and its sound quality is excellent.

As you might expect from a well-known audio company, Sennheiser's VMX100 incorporates a number of acoustic features to ensure the best sound quality. For starters,

ActiveGard protects against sudden, loud bursts of noise. This headset also incorporates VoiceMax Dual Microphone technology to help distinguish speech from other distracting background noises. (One microphone emphasizes your voice while the other removes the noise.) I heard no complaints about sound quality from the people I spoke with while testing this headset.

The VMX100 fits either ear without the need for adapters or earbuds, thanks to its 3D ball joint that pivots the microphone to fit your head and ear. However, this headset's design may fit awkwardly if you wear eyeglasses or sunglasses, because it has a sizeable piece that sits behind your ear. Even though this headset may look slightly bulky, it is very comfortable.

The black 3-in-1 travel kit I tested came with a USB and wall charger, as well as a car charger and a carrying case. Instead of a power button, you can turn the VMX100 on and off simply by opening and closing the headset. You can talk for up to five hours with the VMX100, which also supports as much as 100 hours of standby time.

Find Your Voice

Bluetooth may be a universal standard, but the devices that use this technology are quite varied and unique. As you can see, there are a number of features available in Bluetooth headsets, some of which you may find valuable and others that may not matter to you. Whatever your needs for a Bluetooth headset, chances are good that there is a model designed to suit your preferences, needs, and style.

Coming Soon

As is to be expected, technology is ever changing, and several companies recently announced new headsets that weren't available at the time of this writing. Here's a quick look at some of the upcoming headsets you can look forward to seeing on shelves soon.

BlueAnt V1 Voice Controlled Headset ($119; www.blueantwireless.com). As its name suggests, your voice controls this headset from BlueAnt. The V1 also has dual microphones to help eliminate background noise and multipoint technology, which lets you connect to two phones at once.

Etymotic Research etyBLU Dual Mode Bluetooth Headset ($129; www.etymotic.com). The etyBLU has a quick-connect noise-cancelling boom microphone along with a noise-isolating earphone that lets callers on both sides of the conversation hear clearly, regardless of background noise. If you disconnect the noise-cancelling boom microphone when talking in less noisy environments, etyBLU's internal microphone takes over.

Joby Zivio (Price TBD; www.joby.com). This headset has an extendable, flexible microphone to help overcome the challenges of communicating in noisy environments. As you extend the microphone boom, the gain adjusts up and down. When the boom is fully extended, gains are reduced to the lowest levels.

Nextlink Invisio Q7 ($179.99; www.nextlink.to). Invisio created a Bone Conduction Microphone that detects vibrations in the jawbone. By detecting these vibrations, the Q7 can block out surrounding noises such as wind, crowds, or traffic noise and transmit only your voice to the person you're calling. To ensure you hear callers as well as they can hear you, this headset fits in your ear to help block environmental noise.

Plantronics Explorer 370 ($79.95; www.plantronics.com). This extra-durable headset meets military-grade specifications and can withstand water, dust, and shocks. It also has windscreen technology for clearer calls, regardless of the environment around you.

AT&T Tilt

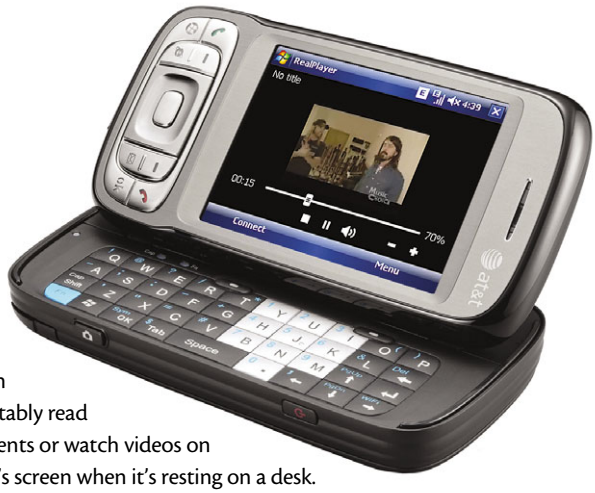
GPS, Wi-Fi, Bluetooth & More

BOTTOM LINE *$549.99; $299.99 with mail-in rebate and two-year service agreement • www.wireless.att.com*

This smartphone is loaded with features, including a tilting touchscreen, wireless broadband, a 3MP camera, and Bluetooth.

Currently, there are quite a few smartphones on the market. The AT&T Tilt is one of these smartphones, but what makes this model stand out in comparison to its rivals is its long list of connectivity options and features. For starters, the Tilt has built-in Wi-Fi (802.11b/g) and 3G (third-generation) wireless connectivity in the form of HSDPA (High-Speed Downlink Packet Access).

The Tilt also has a built-in GPS receiver. For turn-by-turn directions, you'll find a link to download a free 30-day trial of TeleNav on the device. After the trial period ends, the service costs $9.99 per month. If you'd rather not shell out an additional monthly fee, there are free applications that can interact with the GPS receiver to provide directions, such as Windows Live Search or Google Maps.



You can comfortably read documents or watch videos on the Tilt's screen when it's resting on a desk.

Fun & Serious

In addition to keeping you connected on the road, the Tilt can provide entertainment for downtime with its music player, AT&T Mobile Music, and Cellular Video capabilities. Because the phone has Bluetooth 2.0 stereo support, you can listen to your music wirelessly, if you prefer. You'll also find an instant messaging client installed on the phone that can connect to Yahoo!, AOL, and Windows Live Messenger.

Should a Kodak moment strike while you're out, you can capture the action with the Tilt's 3MP camera and 10X digital zoom. Although the pictures I took with the camera were acceptable, you must have a steady hand in order to get a decent picture.

To input commands or text, the Tilt has a large, 2.8-inch touchscreen display along with a QWERTY keyboard that is revealed when you slide the screen horizontally. For easy viewing while using the keyboard, you can tilt the screen up to 40 degrees to a notebook-like viewing angle. The tilted screen is handy for watching videos or reading email while the phone is resting on a desk. The keyboard is comfortable to use, although the two small softkey buttons at the top of the keyboard are slightly hard to access when the screen is tilted a full 40 degrees.

The AT&T Tilt incorporates several useful connectivity features.

When it's time to work on the road, you'll find Microsoft Office Mobile preloaded on the device with support for Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Outlook. AT&T claims that the phone supports a talk time up to four hours and standby time up to eight days.

Function When It Counts

Although the Tilt may not be quite as thin or stylish as other smartphones on the market (such as the Apple iPhone), it is still very stylish and has a reasonable size, at 6 ounces and 4.4 x 2.3 x 0.73 inches (HxWxD). Overall, the Tilt's true strength comes in the form of functionality. For that reason, it's definitely worth considering for new smartphone owners or for current users looking for an upgrade to their AT&T 8525 or other device.

by Jennifer Johnson

The Best New iPod & iPhone Accessories

Add-Ons & Attachments

Here's the great thing about owning an iPod or iPhone: Long after you get your first taste of one of these delectable morsels from Apple, the flavor just keeps coming—wave after wave. And by wave we don't mean the music, video, Web surfing, and phone-related goodness the iPod and iPhone serve up. We mean having your choice of literally thousands of tasty accessories that third-party manufacturers whip up to enhance your iPod/iPhone experience. The following are add-ons and attachments that mobile professionals can sink their teeth into.

by Blaine Flamig

GizMac Accessories Titan Clear For iPhone

BOTTOM LINE *$24.99, $34.99 with holster • www.gizmac.com*

The Titan Clear gives props to the iPhone in the form of horizontal and vertical kickstands that are great for TV and movie watching.

Among the iPhone's many wonderful attributes is the device's straight-up beauty; it really doesn't require additional flair to make it shine. GizMac seems to understand this. The company's two-piece Titan Clear cases for 4GB, 8GB, and 16GB iPhones are understated in appearance, yet they manage to provide some useful functionality you won't find in all cases. Namely, the Titan, available in smoke, pink, and clear bodies, includes horizontal and vertical kickstands on the back that recess nicely into the case when not in use. Pop out the kickstand and you are watching TV shows or movies in landscape or portrait modes. Although the polycarbonate cases don't fully cover the iPhone's display, GizMac includes a clear, plastic sheet to prevent scratches. GizMac also offers a clear rotating holster for $10 extra that securely holds the case but lets you quick-draw the phone without a struggle.

DLO TuneStik With Remote

BOTTOM LINE *$59.99 • www.dlo.com*

On the road or off, DLO's TuneStik gives you a wireless FM transmitter complete with a pass-through dock connector.

If you can manage to not go all Jim Morrison and sing, "Keep your eyes on the road, your hands upon the wheel" while using DLO's TuneStik, you're a better person than I. DLO calls the TuneStik the "most versatile iPod accessory" in company history, and that versatility translates to a wireless FM transmitter that integrates a pass-through dock connector letting you pair the transmitter with other iPod gear. Using the TuneStik is as simple as strapping the remote's cradle to a car steering wheel and tuning your radio to 88.5 on the FM dial. The keychain fob-sized remote controls tracks and volume, illuminates the iPod, and cycles through four FM presets, and when you reach your destination, you can use the remote and TuneStik with other audio sources.

Skullcandy FMJ iPhone Earbuds

BOTTOM LINE *$79.95 • www.skullcandy.com*

Want to strike fear in your colleagues at the next board meeting? Walk in wearing Skullcandy's iPhone FMJ earbuds.

If you're easily intimidated, keep on moving. Skullcandy's iPhone FMJ (Full Metal Jacket) aluminum-housed earbuds aren't for the meek iPhone owners among us. Depending on the chrome-, silver-, or black-colored earbuds you select, the FMJ comes complete with an etched or brushed-metal skull on the earbuds' sides, guaranteeing the FMJ will draw attention to something other than your iPhone. Beyond the daunting appearance, the FMJ pipes audio through the noise-isolating earbuds via 11mm speaker drivers. The earbuds also include a nicely performing microphone/call button unit in the 1.1-meter coiled metal cord that lets you connect and disconnect calls. Skullcandy gives you a zippered carrying case with internal mesh netting suitable for organizing the COMPLY foam tips the company also includes to assist in achieving a tight fit in your ear canal.

Penton Overseas iVideo Spanish

BOTTOM LINE *$20 • www.pentonoverseas.com*

For those times when you need un taxi *to* el aeropuerto *where you'll present* su pasaporte, *iVideo Spanish's audio-video lessons have you covered.*

Buen día, iPodders. Today's lesson is to learn Spanish on your video-playing iPod or iPhone, and with Penton Overseas iVideo language DVD, learning the ins and outs of Spanish won't be a problem. Penton Overseas also offers courses on German, French, Italian, and Chinese, and the lessons are usable on other MP3 players, as well. Beyond grammar and cultural notes, the DVDs include real conversations with subtitles so you get a visual representation of the language being spoken vs. only audio prompts that other iPod-oriented language tools offer. After syncing the iVideo Spanish lessons to your iPod via iTunes, you'll have access to 10 chapters worth of instruction, including Greetings, Introductions, Directions, Travel, Hotel, Restaurants, and Shopping. Each chapter is further divided into Lesson, Word & Phrases, Conversations, and Special Topics subchapters.

Tannoy i30

BOTTOM LINE *$400 • www.tannoydigital.com*

Although pricey, the Tannoy i30 boasts an eye-catching design crafted from a company with 75 years of audio experience.

Months back, we brought you the magnificent Bowers & Wilkins Zeppelin iPod Speakers ($599.95), which is similarly shaped to this month's i30 from UK-based Tannoy, a company that's been in the audio game for 75 years. One look at the i30 will tell you Tannoy isn't messing around either. In addition to sporting dual 4-inch full-range drivers and using BASH amplifier technology, the i30's appearance isn't bad either. Brandishing rounded corners on a glossy-black frame with dark-gray grilles, the i30 includes an auxiliary port to connect non-iPod devices, a Video Out port, and USB port to connect to a computer and sync with iTunes directly. An IR remote handles all playback functions on the buttonless i30, and Tannoy gives you adapters to dock mini, nano, 5G, 5G with video, and iPhone models. If you're certain you'll keep this looker in your office, screw holes are included to mount it to a wall for all to gawk at.

A GUILTY PLEASURE

Electronic Arts Mini Golf

BOTTOM LINE *$4.99 • Available at iTunes*

Being stuck in an airport doesn't mean you can't work on your handicap.

Making your living on the road has its hardships. For instance, it cuts into your time on the links. EA's new Mini Golf for 3G, iPod classic, and 5G iPods won't make your swing any better, but it just might help get your golf fix until the next time you can tee off. Gameplay gives you three playing modes (Single, Pass 'N Play, and Practice Hole) and three courses, each with its own theme. Put enough putts in the cup and you can unlock additional courses. If golf isn't your bag, EA also recently released an iPod-friendly version of Scrabble ($4.99) to get your wordplay on.

Compiled by Blaine Flamig

CONSTRUCTION Zone

The Latest Hotel & Airport News

Hotel Construction News

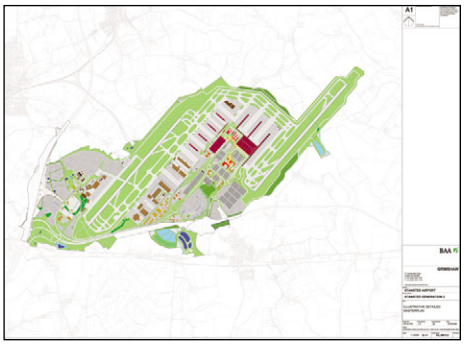
The Phoenix Rises At Motel 6

For the first time in a dozen years, Motel 6 will sport a new prototype design that parent company Accor North America has dubbed Phoenix and describes as "European boutique-style flair." Created by Priestman Goode of London, Phoenix includes new exterior touches; a 24-hour food and beverage marketplace in the lobby area; and guest rooms with new ambient lighting, wood-styled floors, a 32-inch flat-screen television, Wi-Fi access, and a multimedia panel to plug in digital audio players, notebooks, and other devices. "We are excited to have received such positive reactions from our customers about the Phoenix design and are confident that our future guests will also appreciate the fresh, modern design look and welcoming appeal of the new rooms," Olivier Poirot, Motel 6 CEO, said recently. A corporate building planned for later this year will be the first to get a Phoenix makeover. Franchisees will get the design starting in 2009. Plans are to retrofit other corporate spaces with Phoenix elements later.

Motel 6's new Phoenix prototype design features wood-style floors and the use of bright colors to create a European boutique-style flair.

London's Stansted Airport Aims To Air Out

If all goes according to plan, London's Stansted Airport will open a second, nearly 10,000-foot runway, as well as a nearly 312,000-square-foot terminal, by 2015, effectively doubling the airport's capacity. Airport officials unveiled revised plans of the proposed additions in early March. Supporters say the additions would enable the airport to handle 68 million travelers a year by 2030, create 13,000 new jobs in the area, and provide about a $14 billion boon to the UK economy. Initial plans for the expansion, which began in 2003, called for a 1,300-acre site. Current plans, however, reduce the size to about 1,090 acres and require fewer buildings, woodlands, and homes to be affected. Construction would also include a second rail tunnel and fourth platform for Stansted's airport railway station.



Supporters say the proposed addition of a second runway to Stansted Airport in London would enable the airport to handle 68 million passengers by 2030.

Four-Alarm Fire Scorches Upcoming Beantown Hotel

The planned July 2008 opening of the 10,000-square-foot Mandarin Oriental Hotel in Boston's Back Bay area suffered a potential setback in March when fire broke out in the hotel's future fitness room on the fourth floor of the 14-story building. Although there were no injuries reported, smoke and fire forced dozens of workers to evacuate the hotel and caused $30,000 in damage, primarily to windows. Fortunately, firefighters contained the fire in minutes, according to reports, confining damage to a small area. "There is absolutely no damage to the condominium units, to the typical hotel rooms, and to the apartments," stated Kim Steimle, spokesman for Suffolk Construction, which is heading up the project. The Mandarin Oriental will offer 136 guestrooms and 12 suites all with wired and wireless Internet access, a 16,000-square-foot Spa and Fitness Center, 4,200-square-foot Oriental Ballroom, 1,280-square-foot Bangkok Room, 670-square-foot Beijing room, and 525-square-foot Hong Kong boardroom when it opens.

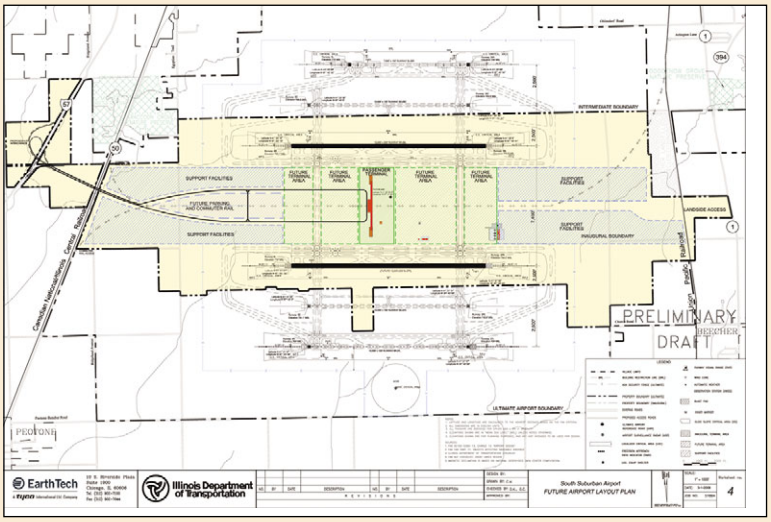
Dallas Lassos New Holiday Inn & Hyatt Regency Space

For travelers soon moseying deep into the heart of Texas, new lodging awaits you under the stars that are bright. First, a new 17-story Hyatt Regency in north Dallas now offers 342 rooms following $6.4 million in enhancements to the former Richardson Hotel. Located 15 miles from the Dallas/Forth Worth International Airport, the hotel has 13,000 square feet of meeting space, including a 7,800-square-foot Texas Ballroom. Wi-Fi is available throughout the hotel, each guestroom has a 42-inch flat-screen TV, and the business center has new video equipment. Meanwhile, the newly renovated, 200-room, nine-story Holiday Inn Market Center Dallas is also now open in downtown Dallas near the Market Center. A recent $7 million renovation project included incorporating 16 suites in the hotel, exterior work, redesigning guestrooms, and adding The Greenbeanery coffee bar. The hotel also features 1,600 square feet of meeting space, free Wi-Fi, and 32-inch flat-panel TVs in guestrooms.

Airport Construction News

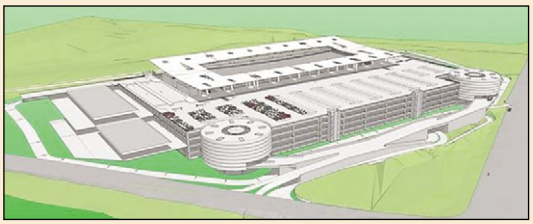
Is Chicago Due For Another Airport?

A South Suburban Airport Project that would add a third major airport to the Chicago area in Will County near the town of Peotone moved forward in March when IDOT (Illinois Department of Transportation) officials submitted a layout to the FAA. Additionally, officials filed a friendly condemnation lawsuit recently to acquire more land for the airport. Nearly 1,940 acres have already been purchased. The airport would cover up to 18,700 acres if the plans are approved. Illinois has reportedly allocated $75 million to the project for land acquisitions. Supporters claim a third Chicago-area airport would create about 10,000 new jobs by the airport's fifth year of operation, as well as relieve Chicago's current aviation overcrowding. Naysayers, however, say the airport would disrupt farmland and pastures some families have owned for generations. Additionally, no major airlines have expressed interest in operating in the new airport to date.



A third airport proposed for construction near a south-Chicago suburb would cover about 18,700 acres if approved.

Rental Car Building In Seattle Shifts Into Drive



Courtesy of Port of Seattle

A massive $413 million project to create a new parking garage facility for Sea-Tac Airport has received the green light.

A mammoth $413 million project to construct a new rental car facility for Seattle's Sea-Tac International Airport is back on track now that the Port of Seattle Commission has lifted a moratorium on funding new capital projects. The moratorium reportedly followed a damning state audit that cited wastefulness and lack of internal control concerning the port's construction management of the project. Construction is to start this summer on the 2.1 million-square-foot facility, which will house 5,400 rental cars from all the major rental companies now operating at the airport when the garage opens in 2011. The facility will be about a 10- to 15-minute shuttle bus ride from the airport and is expected to cut airport rental car traffic by nearly 20% and free 3,200 parking spaces that rental companies now occupy. Rental car fees are funding the project, which will include Wi-Fi access and check-in kiosks for customers.

Los Angeles International Airport

Instant Guide To LAX

Compiled by Calvin Clinchard

LAX By The Numbers

When airport codes were standardized to include three letters, LA added an "X" to become LAX (Los Angeles International Airport).

3

5 LAX is now the nation's fifth busiest airport; in late 2007, Denver International took the No. 4 spot.

20,000 In August 2007, more than 20,000 passengers arriving on international flights were stranded while customs department computers were repaired after crashing.

The route between LAX and Chicago's O'Hare International Airport is the fifth busiest route in the U.S., serving 2.6 million passengers last year.

2.6 million

Sources: Associated Press, Los Angeles International Airport, U.S. Bureau of Transportation Statistics

Essential Services

Wi-Fi for a fee. T-Mobile is the airport's Wi-Fi provider, so if you're a T-Mobile subscriber, you can simply start your notebook or smartphone and Wi-Fi radio, launch your browser, and log in. If you're not a subscriber, you can purchase a DayPass for $9.99 or get one hour of access for $6 (plus 10 cents per minute thereafter).

Business services. Cell phone rentals, notary public service, and fax/photocopy services are available in the Tom Bradley International Terminal. Foreign currency exchange is also available there, as well as in terminals 2, 5, and 6. If you need a charge on the go, you can plug your mobile devices into any of the Samsung Mobile Charging Stations located throughout the airport.

Check flight times. LAX doesn't have a mobile Web site on which to check flights, but if you have your notebook and an Internet connection handy, visit www.lawa.org/fsw for the most current information.

Further assistance. For more information about LAX, check out the airport's official Web site at www.lawa.org/lax or call (310) 646-5252.

Airline Club Locations & Hours

American Airlines Admirals Club
www.aa.com/admiralsclub
- Terminal 4, near gate 40
  Open daily, 5 a.m. to 12 a.m.

Continental Airlines Presidents Club
www.continental.com/web/en%2DUS/content/travel/airport/lounge
- Terminal 6, near gate 62
  Open daily, 4:30 a.m. to 1 a.m.

Delta Air Lines Crown Room Club
www.delta.com/crownroom
- Terminal 5, near gate 53
  Open daily, 5 a.m. to 11:30 p.m.

Northwest Airlines WorldClubs
www.nwa.com/services/bustrav/worldclubs
- Terminal 2, mezzanine level above the elevator
  Open daily, 5:30 a.m. to 12 a.m.

United Airlines Red Carpet Club
www.united.com/redcarpetclub
- Satellite 7, near gate 70A
  Open daily, 5 a.m. to 11 p.m.

US Airways Club
www.usairways.com/awa/content/traveltools/club
- Terminal 1, near gate 2
  Open daily, 5:30 a.m. to 11 p.m.

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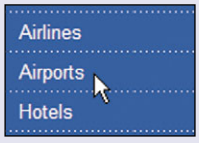

Business Travel Emergency?

Go To PCToday.com For Answers

Unexpected things happen when you're traveling. You lose the ability to access the corporate network. A customer sends you an important file, but you can't open it. Your PDA crashes. Batteries die. Credit cards get stolen or lost. If these or other urgent situations happen to you when you're on the road, our Business Travel 911 articles can help.

Business Travel 911 articles are available to anyone with Internet access, even if you don't subscribe to *PC Today* magazine.* Simply point a browser to www.pctoday.com and click the Business Travel 911 link on the left for a complete menu of helpful articles.

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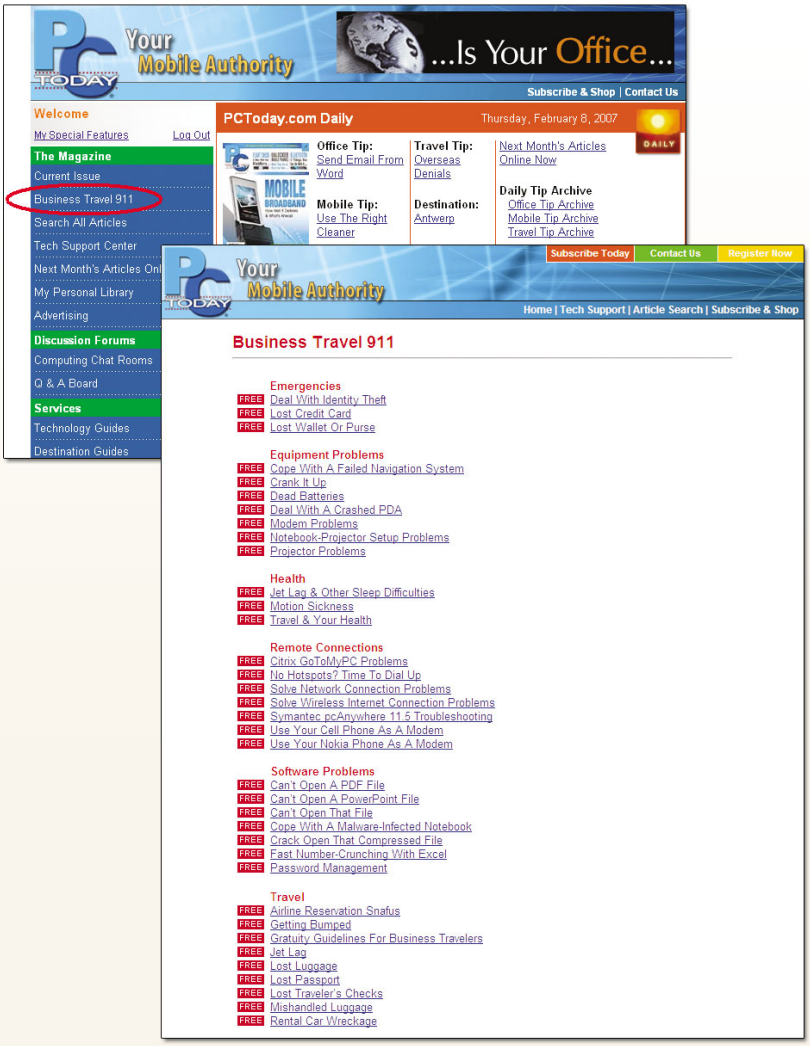

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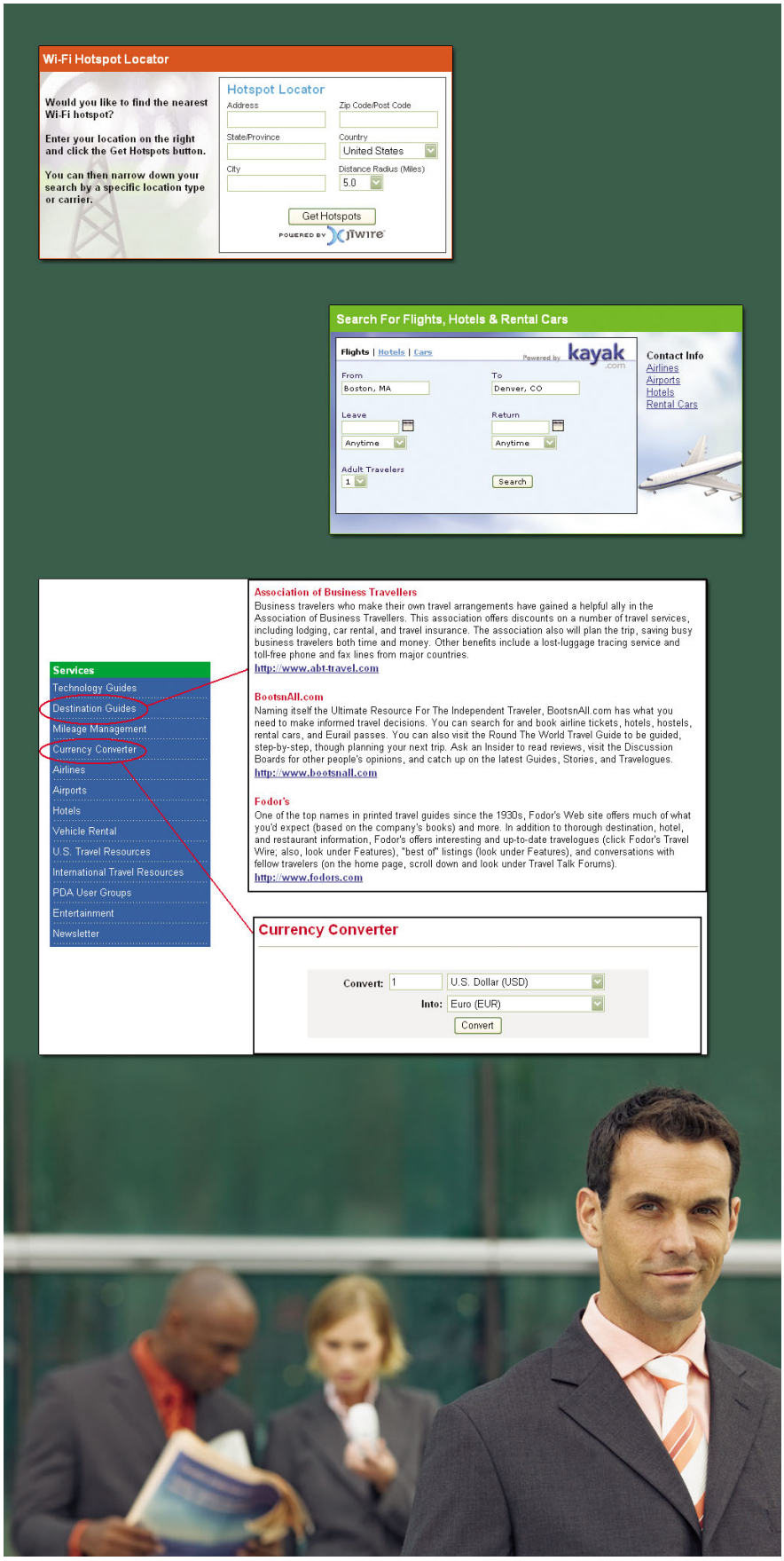


Solve Wireless Internet Connection Problems

When you're on the road, wireless hotspots and services may seem like the proverbial good news/bad news. There's often no shortage of available hotspots, but they may dictate what, when, and how you can connect. Sometimes you can't connect at all even though you can "see" multiple available possibilities. A little foreknowledge can give you the upper hand in any future confrontations.

by Tom Nelson and Mary O'Connor

Control Automatic Connections

Whenever you connect to a new wireless network, Windows XP adds it to a list of preferred connections. Over time, this list can get cluttered with entries, at least some of which are in the same geographic location. You can easily end up connecting to the Beantown Wireless Network when you thought you were connecting to the Quincy Market Hotspot.

WinXP creates the list, but you can control the order of preference. You can also determine whether your computer should make an automatic connection. Click the Wireless Network Connection icon in the System Tray. In the Wireless Connection Status window, click Properties. Next, you want to select the Wireless Networks tab. The order of the entries in the Preferred Networks list controls the order of preference when multiple networks are available. Click a network to select it and then use the Move Up or Move Down buttons to change its position.

Occasionally, the circumstances may dictate that you don't use a preferred connection. To prevent WinXP from automatically connecting to a preferred network, click the network to select it and then click Properties. Select the Connection tab. Remove the check mark next to Connect When This Network Is In Range and click OK.

Revive Your Adapter

If you see a big, fat, red X on the Wireless Network Connection icon in your System Tray, then your wireless adapter has been disabled. This can happen for a number of reasons; some of the more common are laptop power management features, which disable network adapters for longer battery runtimes; manually turned off adapters; and loose or disconnected adapters. Re-enable or reset the adapter as applicable and click the Wireless Network Connection icon in the System Tray. In the Network Connection window, right-click the icon for the target connection and select Enable from the pop-up menu. After a short time, usually less than a minute, the wireless connection should be restored.

Keep Drivers Up-To-Date

Drivers are small pieces of software code that allow an operating system to access wireless adapters and other hardware. Unlike many other types of drivers, those used for wireless technology constantly undergo changes and improvements. A driver that worked flawlessly last month may not be able to connect to a new or improved wireless access point today. Before hitting the road, check the Web site of the manufacturer of your wireless adapter or your laptop for driver updates.

Keep a copy of the old drivers on your laptop or on a CD. You never know when an older version of a wireless driver may prove more stable and usable than a newer one.

Pick A Wireless Network

In crowded urban areas, it is common to find multiple available wireless networks that are in the same location. To make a selection, right-click the Wireless Network Connection icon in the System Tray and select View Available Wireless Networks from the pop-up menu. Each network is listed according to its SSID (Service Set Identifier). The listing also includes pertinent information such as signal strength and security status. Unsecured networks require no password or encryption key, but security-enabled networks require additional information before you can connect. (If a security-enabled network is in your preferred list, WinXP may automatically supply any necessary information.) Now, you can select a network and click Connect.

Wireless Connection Types

It's an alphabet soup of wireless connection protocols out there: 802.11a, or b, or g, or n, or even Pre-N. The two you are most likely to encounter are 802.11b and 802.11g. Both use the 2.4GHz frequency to establish wireless connections at up to 11Mbps and 54Mbps, respectively.

Most hotspots that use 802.11g can also work with the older 802.11b. The 802.11a protocol uses 5.8GHz and is not compatible with 802.11b/g networks. And 802.11n or Pre-N is a faster wireless protocol (270Mbps) that is interoperable with the older 802.11b/g. More important is that 802.11n and Pre-N can also cover a wider area, creating very stable and reliable connections.

In most cases, the speed of a wireless connection will outstrip the ability of a hotspot to transfer data to the Internet. Even if you have a fast 54Mbps connection, chances are that data is being sent or received over a much slower connection to the Internet backbone. Because of this, connection quality on the road is more important than connection speed.

Choose Speed Over Quality

Signal strength and wireless speed go hand in hand. Usually, the better the signal strength, the faster and more stable the connection. If your connection seems slow or you experience stalls and disconnects, make sure the signal strength is adequate.

Click the Wireless Network Connection icon in the System Tray. The Status window opens to display your system's current connection speed and signal strength. If the signal strength seems low, try repositioning your computer or moving it to a different location.

Are you still having signal strength or speed problems? Click the View Wireless Networks button in the Status window. Look through the list of available networks for a stronger local network and ensure that you're connected to the strongest one available.

Make A Better Connection

Using a built-in wireless adapter is not necessarily the ideal connection method. An internal adapter may have a poor antenna, which can then shorten the effective range of a wireless network. An internal adapter can also lock you in to older wireless networking technologies.

Consider using an external wireless adapter, either a plug-in card or a USB adapter. The advantages include keeping up with the latest technology, which in wireless usually means faster and more stable connections, as well as more control over the connection. For example, some external cards and USB adapters let you plug in hi-gain directional antennas, which help lock in a decent signal in areas of marginal reception. These antennas can also significantly cut down interference from external sources, such as other wireless networks, wireless phones, and neon signs.

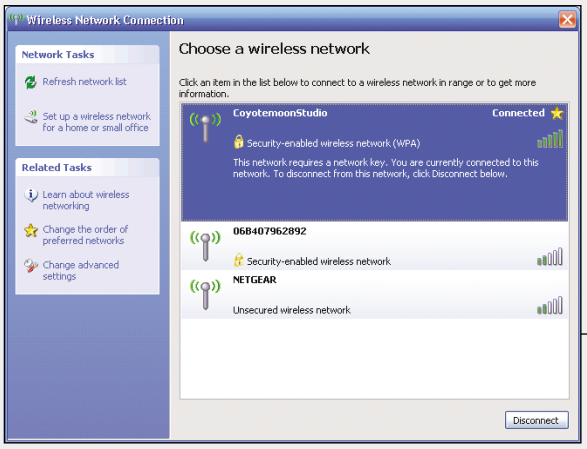
Know Your Name Servers

Name servers, commonly referred to as DNS (Domain Name Server), translate a Web site's URL, such as www.pctoday.com, into its actual IP (Internet Protocol) address (for example, 12.39.144.5).

Local ISPs and company IT folks often want us to use specific name servers, so they provide us with DNS addresses. The problem with this approach is that when you're on the road, a company name server may not be accessible from a remote wireless network. In many cases, a wireless network will want you to use a specific, different name server. Make sure your network connection options are configured for automatic DNS and IP assignments.

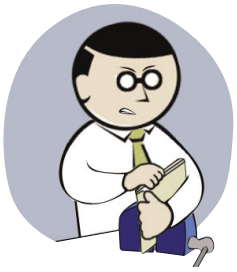
Right-click the Wireless Network Connection icon in the System Tray, and then select Open Network Connections from the pop-up list. Right-click the Wireless Network Connection icon and select Properties from the pop-up menu. Select the General tab, click the Internet Protocol (TCP/IP) entry, and click Properties. Make a note of any current entries in the General and Alternate Configuration tabs. Switch back to the General tab. Make sure Obtain An IP Address Automatically and Obtain DNS Server Address Automatically are selected and click OK.

Should you need to return to the previous settings, use the information you wrote down as a guide.



For more information about a network, including any security requirements, click its name.

Crack Open That Compressed File



YOU'RE ON THE ROAD with your Windows 2000/XP notebook, and you run across a file you can't open. What's more, you can't reach anyone in IT back at your office.

You may not be familiar with the type of file you're dealing with, but you're pretty sure that the sender or download site indicated that it's a compressed file. If you could only unpack, or decompress, the file, you could go about your business. Here's some help.

by Marty Sems

What They Are

First, here's a quick primer on compressed files. If you already know what these are, skip ahead to "What To Do."

Compressed files, or archives, contain one or more files or folders that have been compacted into a format that takes up less storage space. Much like a trash compactor squashes the air out of garbage to make a much smaller brick out of a pile of rubbish, a file compression utility uses various tricks to reduce a file's size. One of the most basic such tricks is to remove redundant data. Instead of storing a piece of data for every yellow pixel in a photo of your new car, for instance, an archive might store one yellow dot and a digital note to repeat that pixel as needed throughout the image. Archives are sometimes called zipped files after the ZIP format popularized by the PKZip and WinZip utilities.

Compressing a file or folder means saving it in a new format. There are lots of compressed file formats, but some of the most common have the file extensions .ZIP, .SIT, and .RAR. If you use WinRAR to compress a document named Presentation .ppt, for example, you'll get an archive called Presentation.rar. Presentation.rar should take up significantly less space on your hard drive than it did in its PPT form, but anyone who wants to open the compacted file will need WinRAR, UnRAR, or some other utility that can decompress the format. After unpacking a file, its extension will revert back to what it was before it was zipped, such as TXT for a text document or XLS for an Excel sheet.

Some compressed files can unpack themselves when you double-click them. Most self-extracting archives have .EXE extensions, though they may be referred to as SFX or other types of files. These can be handy when you want to send someone a compressed file, but you don't want her to spend time trying to find a suitable decompression utility.

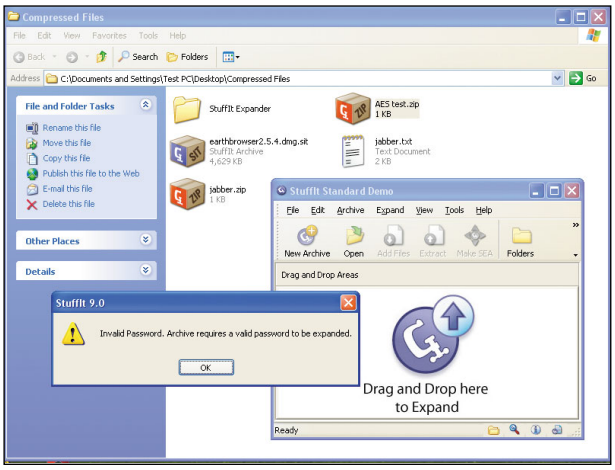
What To Do

Before you do anything else, check to see whether the file is available in another form. If someone emailed it to you, ask him to send you an uncompressed version or an archive in a format your PC can open. This can save you a great deal of time.

No dice? OK, see what Windows can do for you. Win2000 can't natively open ZIPs or most other compressed files. On the other hand, WinXP will open a wizard to help you decompress most ZIPs when you double-click them. However, WinXP can't handle them all. Refer to the "File Decompression Utilities" sidebar for third-party apps that might do the trick.

If WinXP can't open a particular file, compressed or not, it will ask you whether you want it to go online to try to find a utility that can. Select Use The Web Service To Find The Appropriate Program and click OK. When we tried this with a SIT compressed file, Microsoft provided us with a hyperlink to a download page with the StuffIt Expander utility (www.stuffit.com/win/expander). Try downloading the indicated program and using it to open the file.

If you don't want WinXP to go online, choose Select The Program From The List and click OK. Click the checkbox next to the application on your PC that you think might be able to unpack the archive, if any, or click Browse to find one that isn't listed. Don't check the box next to Always Use The Selected Program To Open This Kind Of File at this stage. That option says that you're absolutely sure that you've guessed right that the app can unpack the



Not all ZIPs are created equal. StuffIt Expander 9.0.0.21 asked us for the password we used to encrypt this ZIP in WinZip 9.0 but wouldn't accept our answer.

archive, stacked against which is the fact that the program hasn't already associated itself with opening that type of file. Click OK when you're done.

Win2000 doesn't offer to find a suitable application on the Web when it can't open a file. Instead, it skips straight to an Open With window similar to WinXP's. The differences are that you need to select Other to browse your PC for an appropriate program, and the option to ignore (for now) is labeled Always Use This Program To Open These Files.

If neither your OS nor the applications you have on hand can crack open the file, download and install a decompression utility that can unpack the file format.

Of course, some IT departments configure employees' computers in such a way as to prevent the user from installing any new software. This not only prevents employees from using programs that are security risks. The rather obvious downside to all of this, of course, is that without the IT department's help, you may not be able to install a utility you really need in order to do your job—especially when you're on a plane or in a hotel room somewhere. If you're desperate, try renaming the decompression utility's EXE installation file to Excel.exe, Winword.exe, or the name of some other application that your IT department has decided is safe to run.

StuffIt Expander seems to cover most of the format bases, so it's a good place to start for your decompression needs. It's a free utility, but it comes wrapped in a trial version of StuffIt Standard or Deluxe. We downloaded the StuffIt Standard 15 Day Free Trial option, which didn't require a credit card as did the Deluxe download.

After we installed Stuff-It 9.0.0.21, we could open several ZIP and SIT archive files by right-clicking them, choosing StuffIt Archive and Expand Here, and clicking Continue when a nag window popped up.

File Decompression Utilities

Some of the following are free unpacking tools that let you open compressed files. Others are more full-featured titles that also let you create your own archives, though these generally aren't free. Note that Windows XP can compress and decompress most ZIP files up to 4GB in size without a third-party utility.

Utility	Price	File Types Current Versions Can Unpack	Where To Get It
StuffIt Expander	Free	ARC, BinHex, BZIP, CAB, GZ, HQX, LHA, MIME, RAR, SIT, SITX, TAR, ZIP, others	www.stuffit.com
UnRAR	Free	RAR (command line utility)	www.rarlab.com/rar_add.htm
WinAce	$29	ACE, ARC, ARJ, CAB, GZ, JAR, LHA, RAR, TAR, ZIP (64-bit), ZOO	www.winace.com
WinRAR	$29	ACE, ARJ, BZ2, CAB, GZ, LZH, RAR, TAR, TAR.BZ2, TAR.GZ, ZIP (64-bit), others	www.rarlab.com
WinZip	$29.95	BinHex, CAB, GZ, MIME, TAR, TGZ, TAZ, UUE, XXE, Z, ZIP (64-bit)	www.winzip.com
ZipGenius	Free	ACE, CAB, CZIP, EAR, JAR, RAR, RPM, SQX, TAR, WAR, XPI, ZIP, 7z, others	www.zipgenius.it

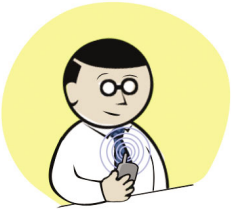
When All Else Fails

If one utility doesn't work, try another. As we've shown with the ZIP format, a file compressed by one utility might not be openable by another, or even by earlier versions of the same program. Some fee-based utilities come with free trial periods, so don't shell out any money for anything unless you have to.

Even if you are successful at unpacking an archive, it still might not contain any files you can use. It doesn't do you much good to decompress and decrypt a file, only to discover that it's for a Linux or Mac OS, or an application you don't have. If you can't locate an app that can convert the file to a format you can use, all you can do is to ask for the file in a different format.

Of course, sometimes unopenable files are simply corrupted, and there isn't much you can do with them. This can happen whether files are compressed or not. Contact the sender for a replacement, or email the Webmaster of the site from which you obtained the archive.

Use Your Cell Phone As A Modem



IN THIS AGE OF NEAR-UBIQUITOUS wireless Internet access, it's becoming harder and harder to imagine a scenario in which you and your laptop are unable to connect to the Web. Such dreadful places do exist, however, and you can't recognize them until you're in one, settled in and gaping at a blank Wireless Network Connection dialog box.

You can prepare for such a crisis by carrying a data-capable cell phone. When the hotspot turns cold and others are forced to pull out their Sudoku books, you can pull out your phone, connect it to your laptop, and surf on.

by David Finck

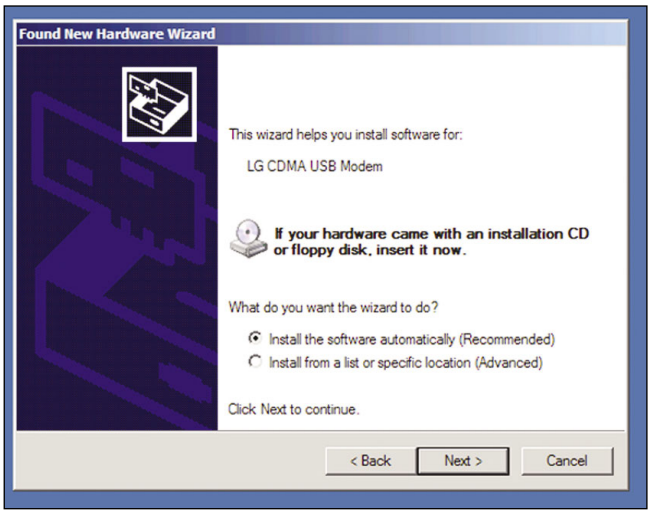
What You Need

If you want to be one of those people who can access the Internet anytime, then you're in luck. We looked at various plans, phones, and available programs that will let you make a connection from just about anywhere.

The service plan. All four of the major carriers offer data service plans that include full Internet access. As you would expect, these plans require additional fees over and above your regular monthly service charges. They also require a term of service, either a one- or two-year commitment on your part.

A service plan-capable phone. Despite all the hype you hear about email and Internet on your family phone, those services, such as Verizon Wireless' V CAST and Sprint's PCS plans, are limited-access offerings. They are great for keeping up with news, weather, and sports and for sending pictures and email to your friends, but without full Internet capability. There are only a handful of phones from each carrier that support Verizon's BroadbandAccess, Sprint's Mobile Broadband Power Vision Network, Cingular's DataConnect, and T-Mobile's device-specific data plans.

Some phones require you to buy the data cable as an additional-cost accessory. For a Verizon Wireless phone, look for one that includes or supports Verizon's Mobile Office Kit. This kit has the cables and software needed to set up your connection.



When you first connect your phone via the USB cable, Windows XP's Found New Hardware dialog box appears. Follow the prompts to install any necessary drivers for the phone.

One note of caution: Cingular's Data Connect plan provides broadband speeds only with the company's Laptop Connect air card, according to a Cingular salesperson. Using a tethered device, including a BlackBerry or smartphone, as a modem limits you to simple dial-up speeds. We don't recommend that for any purpose.

For this article, we used an LG VX8100 flip phone from Verizon and a Palm Treo 700p from Sprint. Both are excellent phones, and, of course, the Treo has full PDA capabilities.

The software. After you lock down your plan (and your provider has you locked in) and you have your phone, you need the software that's specific to your provider's service. If you bought a complete phone kit with the software included, load the disc that comes with the kit. If there is more than one disc, be sure to load each one in the proper order. If you use Verizon's kit, for example, load the disc with the USB drivers for the phone and install those before loading the VZAccess Manager software. If you buy the phone without the kit and sign up for the data plan later, or if you sign up online, you'll download the software from your carrier's (or its partner's) Web site.

For our tests, we downloaded the connection software for both phones: VZAccess Manager from SmithMicro for Verizon Wireless and Sprint's PCS Connection Manager.

Step-By-Step Setup

Setting up your phone as a modem for your laptop is simple. We walk you through the steps for the programs we downloaded for our test phones.

Sign up with a carrier. After deciding what service, plan, and phone you want to use, sign up with a carrier and be prepared to live with your choice for as many as two years. You can go to a local store or commit online at your preferred carrier's Web site.

Get your phone. After signing up for the plan, choose your phone. If you're at the store and your handset is in stock, the salesperson should be able to set you up on the spot. Be sure to get a data cable with the phone. Verizon offers its Mobile Office Kit, which includes the phone, cable, and software you need for a seamless setup experience.

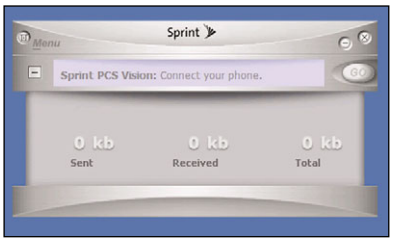
Sign up online and you can download the required software, but you'll have to get your phone shipped to you.

Install any required software. Each phone we tested required a software installation for full Internet access. A T-Mobile representative told us the company gears its plans toward specific phones that are preloaded with the necessary software, so this step may be unnecessary for some users.

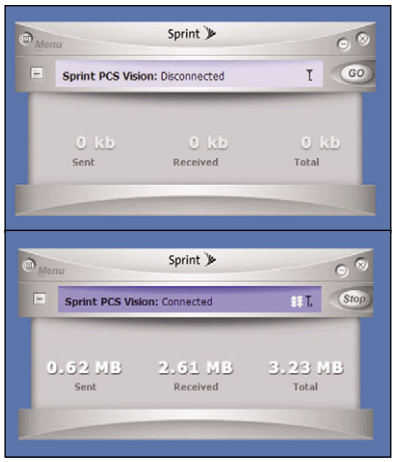
Download the applications you need and install the software. Begin your installation with the phone and USB cable disconnected from your laptop and connect the phone only when directed. We were prompted to connect the Verizon phone during the install, but the Sprint Treo installation required the phone and USB cable to be disconnected from the laptop during the entire installation. Connecting the Treo can cause permanent problems that will demand a full reinstall to correct.

Open the application. The installation process for each of our phones put an icon on our Desktop. Double-click the Sprint PCS Connection Manager icon and the silver bar interface springs up on-screen, prompting you to connect your phone. Plug your USB cable into the phone and the laptop and turn on the phone. There is a short handshake process as the software first recognizes the phone, checks that Mobile Broadband is part of the service plan for that number, and finally makes the connection. When that process is complete, the odd message "Sprint PCS Vision: Disconnected" appears. That means the software is ready. Click the Go button and, after a brief wait, the message changes to "Sprint PCS Vision: Connected." Next, open your browser. You now have full access to the Internet, just as if you'd plugged your laptop into a wall jack.

Verizon's VZAccess Manager has a few more features than Sprint's PCS Connection Manager. VZAccess Manager shows all available networks, lists all activity in a session log that tracks sessions and time online, and lets you send text messages (with a text-enabled phone and at regular prices). It also offers an apps button where you can add one-click access to any MS Office application on your hard drive, Web and E-mail buttons that launch your default apps for those functions, and a Help button. A status bar across the bottom of the display shows time spent and your connection.



The Sprint Connection Manager has a simple interface that floats on your Desktop. Here you see the manager prompt the user to connect a phone via the USB port.



After connecting your phone, there is a short wait while your laptop recognizes the phone and you see the Disconnected message. Click the Go button and the message changes to Connected. Open your browser for Internet access. To disconnect, click the Stop button. Service charges are based on connection time, not browsing time, so don't forget to disconnect.

Easy & Fast

As long as you're familiar with downloading and installing software and you connect your phone at the proper time, the setup of your phone-as-modem should be fast and simple. We were pleasantly surprised at the speed of our connection on the Sprint Power Vision network, which uses Sprint's EVDO (Evolution Data Optimized) network. We traveled all over the Internet, and pages consistently loaded at speeds not much slower than our home DSL service. The LG VX8100, a standard flip phone, performed well, too, and Web pages loaded quickly from Verizon's EVDO network.

When Internet access is critical to your business, the cost of a broadband data plan is well worth the investment. When your office network goes down, when the hotspot cools, when you find yourself without an available LAN (local-area network) or Wi-Fi connection, your data-capable phone and broadband access service plan will pay dividends very quickly.

The Business End

Spanning The Storage Spectrum With Seagate

We use digital storage every day. Nearly all our favorite electronic devices—computers, MP3 players, DVRs, and so on—incorporate hard drives or other forms of digital storage. As the senior director of product line management, consumer electronics for Seagate, David Burks knows the many ways we use hard drives in our daily lives. We spoke with Burks to learn more about how Seagate is working to enhance its hard drives. Read on as he tells us more about Seagate's new D.A.V.E. platform and other advances in storage technology that could double the capacity of our drives in just two years. Answers have been edited for space and clarity.

Seagate's David Burks

Q What types of drives does Seagate currently provide for mobile devices?

A Seagate offers 2.5-inch mobile laptop drives that fit into your standard laptop. We also have a line of 1.8-inch drives that were initially designed as a consumer electronics storage device. That product line will extend into the laptop categories over the coming years. We also offer mobile products as a complete solution, where you have a hard drive inside a case that connects to a computer or other devices through USB cable.

Within the next few months, we're going to offer our D.A.V.E. [Digital Audio Video Experience] technology product, which is essentially a wireless hard drive. It has the storage capability along with wireless communication via Bluetooth and 802.11 wireless. This standalone product can connect to other intelligent wireless devices and serve as a memory extension device in a ubiquitous connectivity concept that we've developed.

Q What is Seagate doing to develop smaller drives for mobile devices?

A In terms of the core drive technology, we're focusing on 1.8-inch drive technology. We are specifically not continuing to invest in the 1-inch drive technology and the 1.3-inch drive technology because we believe those form factors don't have enough continuous differentiation from flash to really make them viable long-term. When you get into the 1.8-inch category, we think there will be at least another five years where there will be a significant differentiation in the amount of storage you can get for your dollar.

When it comes to flash technology in general, we continually investigate the opportunity to launch a solid-state hard drive product. Even though we haven't announced that product, we have announced our interest and intentions of potentially going there in the future.

Q You hear a lot about perpendicular recording technology in the mobile space. What benefits does this technology provide?

A The primary benefit of perpendicular recording is that it gives the hard drive industry a whole new way to increase capacity. You don't necessarily have to think of increasing capacity as just bigger and bigger hard drives. As we increase capacity, or in industry we call that aerial density, we also decrease complexity in the hard drives. This drives down cost and increases reliability because with fewer moving parts, you have fewer things that can go wrong. As a result, we're getting less expensive over time and more reliable to the consumer. In addition, as we increase those aerial densities, we can get the same amount of storage in a smaller footprint.

Q How does the technology work?

A If you look down on top of a disk that is part of the hard drive, think of each little bit as a little rectangular

Seagate's D.A.V.E. platform lets you collect, play, and manage digital content.

area of storage. Each bit, a one or a zero, takes up space on that media in that little rectangular space. Picture these little blocks laid out end to end. Now take each little rectangle and set it up on end as if it was a block. Then, you can scoot everything much closer together. That's essentially what perpendicular recording is doing. It's consuming essentially the same area in the magnetic storage of the data, but it's using more of the media depth and using less of the linear space. By squishing all those bits closer together, we can increase capacity. Perpendicular recording has enabled us to double the capacity of our drives over longitudinal products shipping two years ago. We anticipate that we will continue this pace of capacity growth into the future, doubling the capacity of our drives again in the next two years.

Q How is Seagate working to secure data on mobile devices?

A The most common form of keeping data safe is to encrypt it. Seagate has a hardware-based encryption capability that we call FDE, or full disk encryption. We use a 128-bit cryptographic algorithm in our FDE. It's basically the best encryption that you can get according to government standards. We incorporate that into our laptop drives through the hardware. There's absolutely no performance degradation: As the data is written onto the hard drive, it's fully encrypted. The only way you can get access to that data is if you have the valid password to that drive. That drive can be hooked up to your password so that when you log in, you have to enter your password to get access to your data, or the drive can be connected to a biometric reader. If that laptop is stolen, or if you give it away and somebody pulls the drive out of it, they can't get access to the content on the hard drive without knowing the password. Really, the only functional way to reuse that drive is to reformat it, so your data is completely safe.

Seagate's Momentus 5400 FDE.2 drives use full disk encryption to protect your important data.

Q What does Seagate do to help protect drives from the rigors of travel?

A We have very sophisticated firmware that can compensate for different types of bumps and rugged usage expectations that might happen in a laptop environment. We take into consideration the operating environment of the drive and design the drive to compensate for some of that motion so the drive can operate as planned. In addition, because a hard drive can be damaged by a severe shock, we've added what we call zero-G sensors to some of our new laptop products. The drive can actually sense when it's in a free fall within a couple of millimeters. If you drop your laptop, the drive senses it's in a free fall, parks the head, and shuts everything down. By the time the laptop hits the ground, it minimizes any damage that can happen to the drive.

Q Where do you see the storage market heading?

A A couple of key trends have hit our radar screen. Prior to 2006, most of the storage consumed in the marketplace was consumed via businesses. As of about 2006, most storage is used by consumers. When you look at all of the different products that are using storage in the consumer space and in the consumer home, it's overcoming the traditional IT business space. To that extent, you'll see storage start to be more customized toward some of the consumer-centric use models; the most obvious one is video, which takes an incredible amount of space. We see the ongoing focus on high-definition video will continue to march on. That's going to be a huge driver of storage in the consumer home. We think this whole trend of seeing storage be skewed into the consumer space as opposed to the enterprise space is going to continue for quite some time.

by Jennifer Johnson

The Delayed Traveler

by Marty Sems

Admit It, This Is The First Page You Turned To

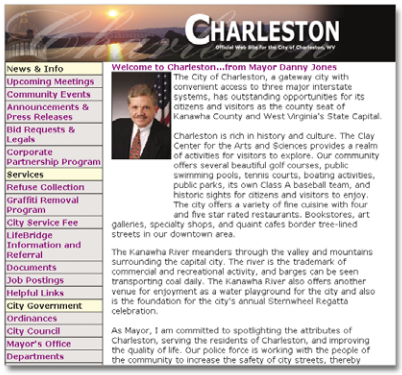
The Midwest's Black Hole

Wanna get there? Not just on time, but at all? Try to avoid flights out of O'Hare. The notorious Chicago airport apparently has the world's highest number of flight cancellations, according to government statistics cited by the *Chicago Tribune*. Oh, and out of 32 airports, O'Hare came in last in 2007 with the least number of on-time departures. We've personally experienced an eight-hour delay there—not exactly the kind of thing one would choose to experience before a long, trans-Pacific flight to Asia. Earth to Chicago: No amount of dinosaur skeletons can make travelers feel any happier about all this.

At Least It Wasn't A Wanted Poster

Nobody would believe Danny Jones. The officials at John Wayne Airport just didn't accept that he was who he said he was, mainly because his driver's license had expired. So Jones, the mayor of Charleston, W.Va., had an idea. He dug a magazine out of his luggage, a publication used to promote his city, and turned the pages to a letter from the mayor welcoming visitors to Charleston. Next to it was his picture. The airport officials stepped aside, and Danny Jones made his flight home.

SOURCE: *USA TODAY*



28 Calls Later

OK, so cell phone radiation might not cause cancer. But it looks like it probably disturbs your sleep. The Mobile Manufacturers Forum was very embarrassed when a study it had funded came to this conclusion. Scientists in Sweden and Michigan determined that cell phone use shortly before bedtime made it take subjects longer to reach deep levels of sleep and shortened their stays in these regenerative states. The result was that nighttime cell users experienced more confusion, depression, headaches, lack of concentration, mood and personality changes, and even symptoms akin to those of ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder). The findings corroborate a recent, much larger Belgian study. With personal cells ubiquitous among teenagers of today, perhaps they really *are* more zombie-like than their forebears.

SOURCE: MATHABA.NET

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